

Gahan Wilson

FIFTY YEARS OF PLAYBOY CARTOONS

Gahan Wilson

FIFTY YEARS of PLAYBOY CARTOONS



FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS, INC.

Editor: Gary Groth
Book Designer: Jacob Covey
Book Production: Paul Baresh
Associate Publisher: Eric Reynolds
Publishers: Gary Groth and Kim Thompson
Fantagraphics Books: 7563 Lake City Way NE, Seattle, Washington 98115

Gahan Wilson: 50 years of Playboy Cartoons is copyright © 2009 Playboy. Introduction by Hugh M. Hefner is copyright © 2009 Hugh M. Hefner. Introduction by Neil Gaiman is copyright © 2009 Neil Gaiman. Appreciation and interview with Gahan Wilson is copyright © 2009 Gary Groth. Photos on back cover and on page 936 are copyright © 2009 Seth Kushner. All other photos are copyright © 2009 Playboy. All rights reserved. Permission to reproduce material must be obtained from the publisher.

Special thanks to Jennifer Thiele. Gahan Wilson interview transcribed by Gavin Lees and Jessica Loma.

To receive a free full-color catalog of comics, graphic novels, prose novels, and other fine works of artistry, call 1-800-657-1100, or visit www.fantagraphics.com. You may order books at our web site or by phone.

Distributed in the U.S. by W.W. Norton and Company, Inc. (212-354-5500)
Distributed in Canada by the Canadian Manda Group (416-516-0911)
Distributed in the United Kingdom by Turnaround Distribution (108-829-3009)

First Fantagraphics printing: November, 2009
ISBN: 978-1-60699-298-2. Printed in China



Gahan Wilson

FIFTY YEARS of PLAYBOY CARTOONS



FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS, INC.

Gahan Wilson
35 Morton Street
New York 14, N.Y.

Mr. Hugh M. Hefner
Editor-Publisher
PLAYBOY
232 E. Ohio Street
Chicago 11, Illinois

Dear Mr. Hefner:

I'm very curious to find out if the color finishes I sent to you met with your satisfaction and to hear any comments on them you might care to make. Also I'd like to find out if you want me to go ahead with the finishes on the others. Also, and this is my main motive for writing at this point, I could make very good use of any monies sent along as things are grown a bit tight with me of late.

Waiting hopefully for your reply and wishing you the best

As always

Yrs.,

Gahan
Gahan Wilson

ALL MY OWN WORK



So now I'll climb back on my pins and needles and wait for your reply.

Wishing you all the best, of course,

I am,

Yrs. truly,

Gahan

Gahan Wilson



INTRODUCTION *by*

HUGH HEFNER

The cartoons have always been an important part of *Playboy*—as essential as the articles, fiction, interviews, and centerfolds. They have helped to define the sophisticated nature of the publication and giving them full-page, full color treatment gave *Playboy* its own unique appearance and personality.

The *New Yorker* had built a stable of iconic cartoonists in the 1930s and 1940s and I hoped to do the same when I launched *Playboy* in 1953. My personal favorites were Peter Arno and Charles Addams in the *New Yorker*, and Eldon Dedini and E. Simms Campbell in *Esquire*. Arno and Addams weren't available to me because they were under exclusive contract to the *New Yorker* so I had to look elsewhere for cartoonists of equivalent quality. For Peter Arno, I discovered Julien Dedman, a New York ad executive and former editor of the *Yale Record*, whose style and sensibilities were obviously inspired by Arno. And then came the immortal Jack Cole, whose lush ladies became an early favorite in our pages, followed by Erich Sokol, and commercial artists such as Al Stine and Ben Dennison who turned their considerable skills to providing fuller feminine beauty to our cartoon pages.

These cartoonists and artists specialized in a certain sexual sophistication, a way of rendering the female form in a way most pleasing to

Above: Gahan Wilson, 1960.

Opposite and following page: Early letter from the artist to his new publisher.

the eye, but Charles Addams offered a different sort of off-beat humor and I wanted that dash of pepper along with the sensual spice that was so much a part of *Playboy's* appeal.


I found what I was looking for in Gahan Wilson, who had been drawing small, black and white cartoons for the family magazines *Look* and *The Saturday Evening Post*. It was obvious that Gahan Wilson had just the sort of skewed, off-beat sense of humor I wanted.

Gahan and I first met at the *Playboy* offices in Chicago. He was shown into my office, and—as Gahan often tells it—I reached over my desk, shook his hand, and said, “I’ve been waiting for you.”


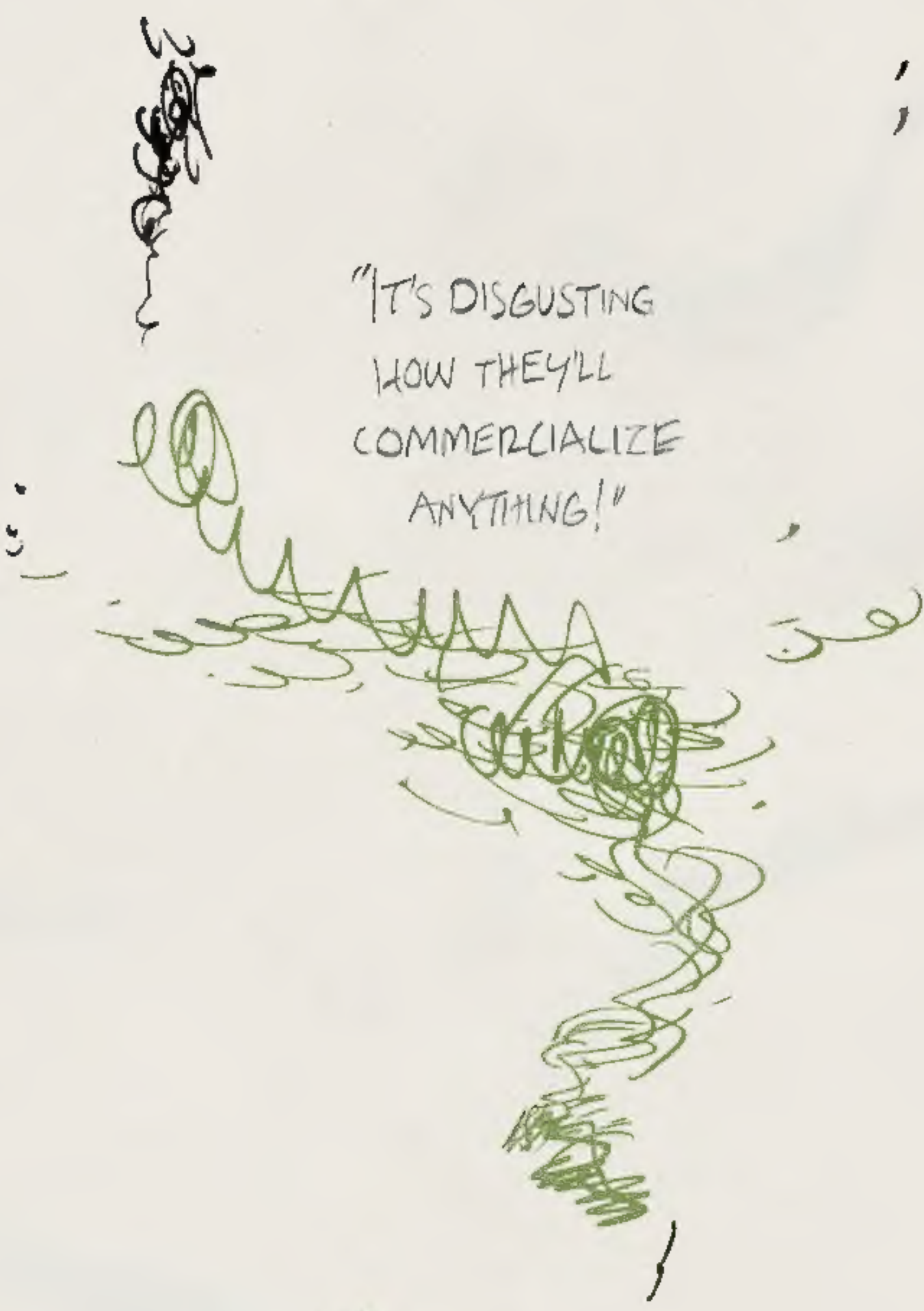
I don’t think I could have imagined before the fact how Gahan was going to grow. What one saw in the beginning was only the promise. He had never been published in color before and there was some concern that the color might work against the eerie results that I wanted. So, in the beginning, I had him work with a limited palette, dominated by a single color—green, yellow or brown—to achieve the desired effect. (Charles Addams had never worked in color and his black and white washes helped set the proper macabre mood.)

Gahan Wilson was an immediate hit with our readers and a perfect contrast to our usual, more sexual cartoon fare. I continued to add a number of truly talented cartoon contributors, including Shel Silverstein, Jules Feiffer, John Dempsey, Phil Interlandi and, when *Esquire* stopped publishing cartoons (because of pressure from the U.S. Post Office, who found Esqy’s full-page cartoons and pin-ups objectionable), Eldon Dedini and E. Simms Campbell joined our ranks as well. In the pages of *Playboy*, Campbell’s harem girls were once again permitted to go topless.

By the early 1960s, I could say with real satisfaction that no other magazine in the world—the *New Yorker* included—had a cartoon stable the equal of *Playboy's*. And no cartoonist was more popular, or more enduring, than Gahan Wilson. His first cartoon appeared in *Playboy* in the December, 1957 issue and he hasn’t missed an issue in half-a-century. He is, in many respects, one of a kind. The readers love him and so do I. †



"IT'S DISGUSTING
HOW THEY'LL
COMMERCIALIZE
ANYTHING!"





"The idea is to start a little satellite program of our own...."



Gahan Wilson



Gahan Wilson

*"Sorry to keep you so late, but I'm determined to get
to the bottom of this werewolf fixation of yours."*



Gahan Wilson

"How did a guy like you ever get into a business like this?"



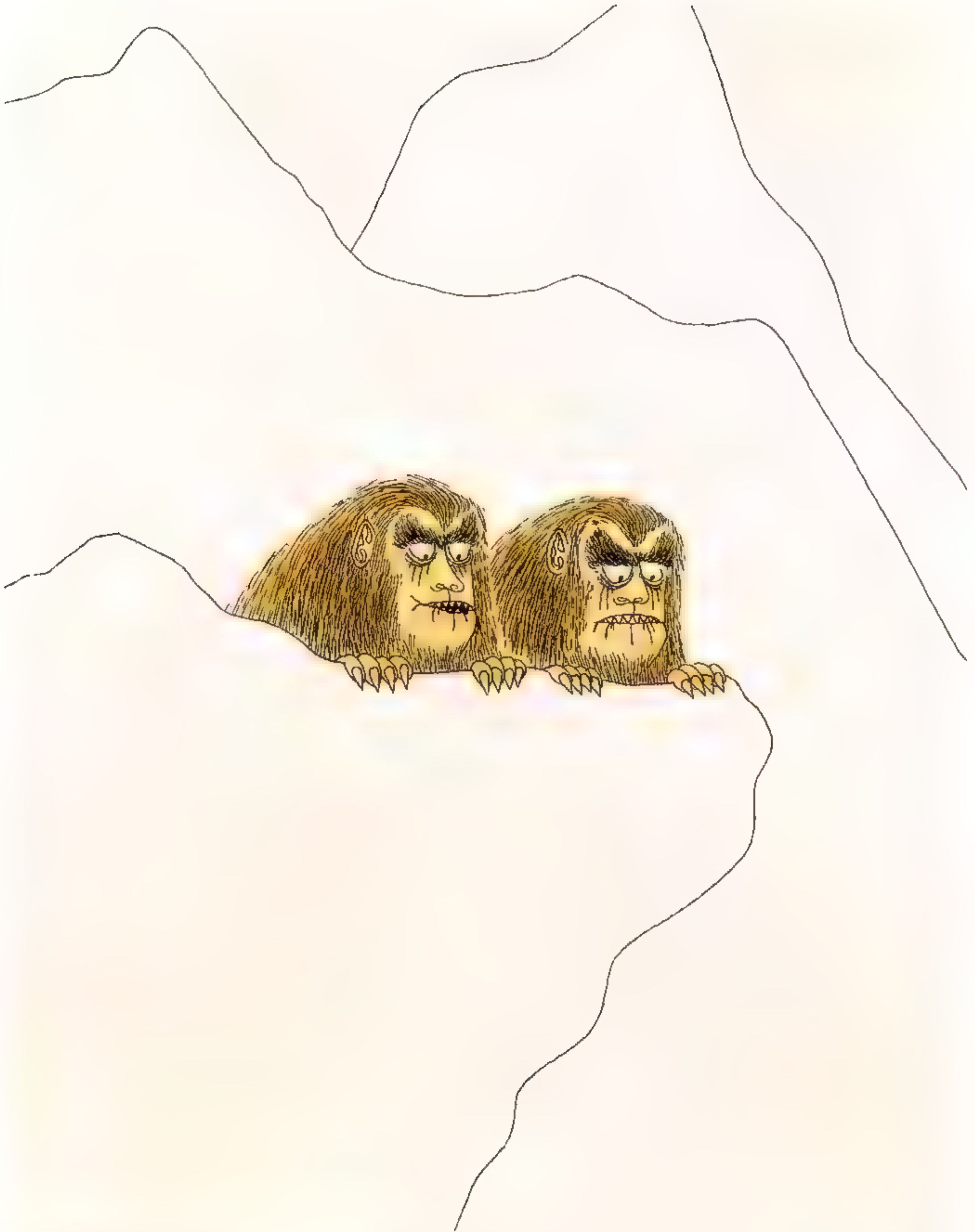
Gahan Wilson

"Anything else, boss?"



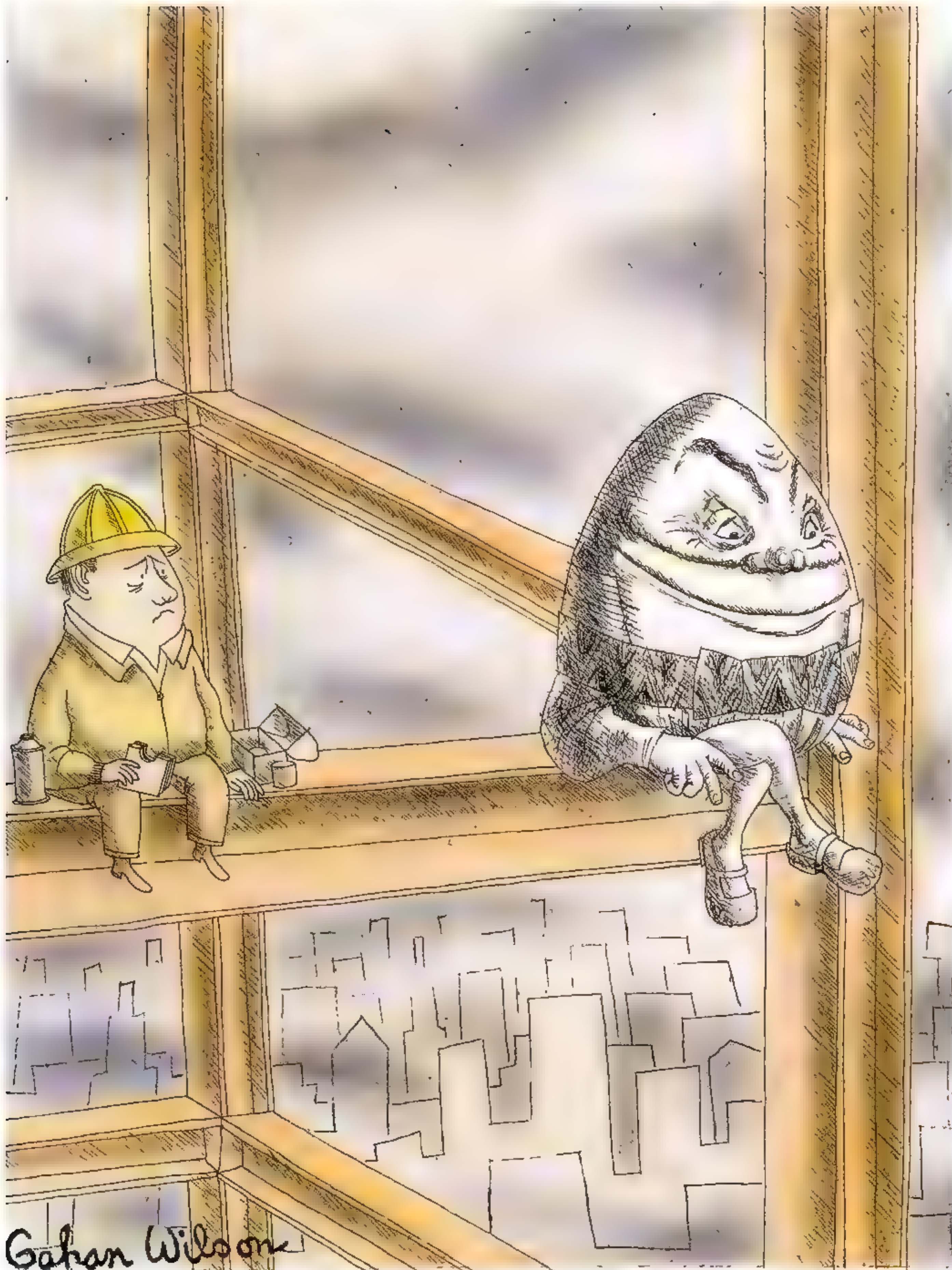
Gahan Wilson

"Looks like the end of civilization as they know it."



Gahan Wilson

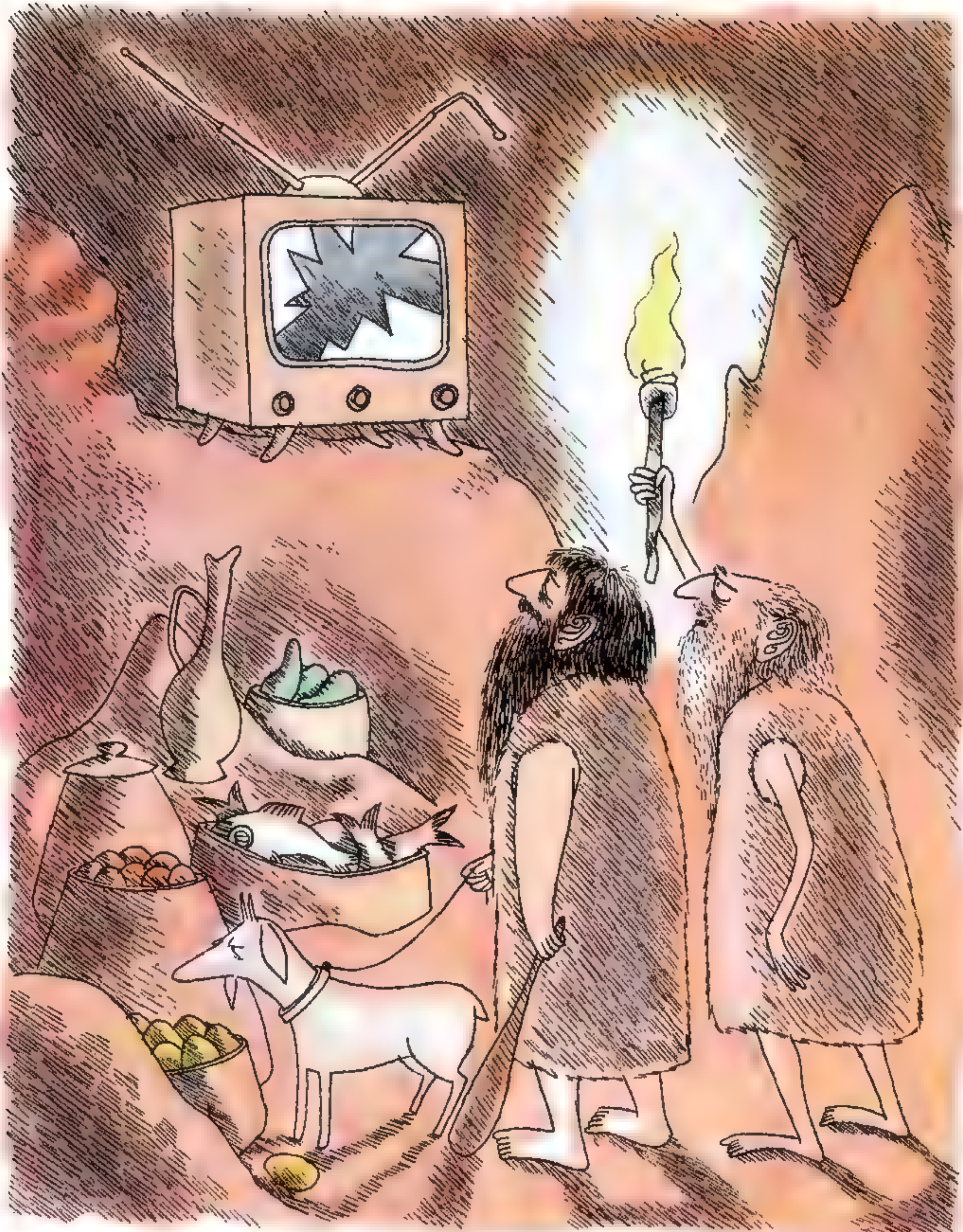
"There's another one of those abominable mountain climbers."





Gahan Wilson

*"...Only a minute or so more and man will have his first view
of the other side of the moon!"*



Gahan Wilson

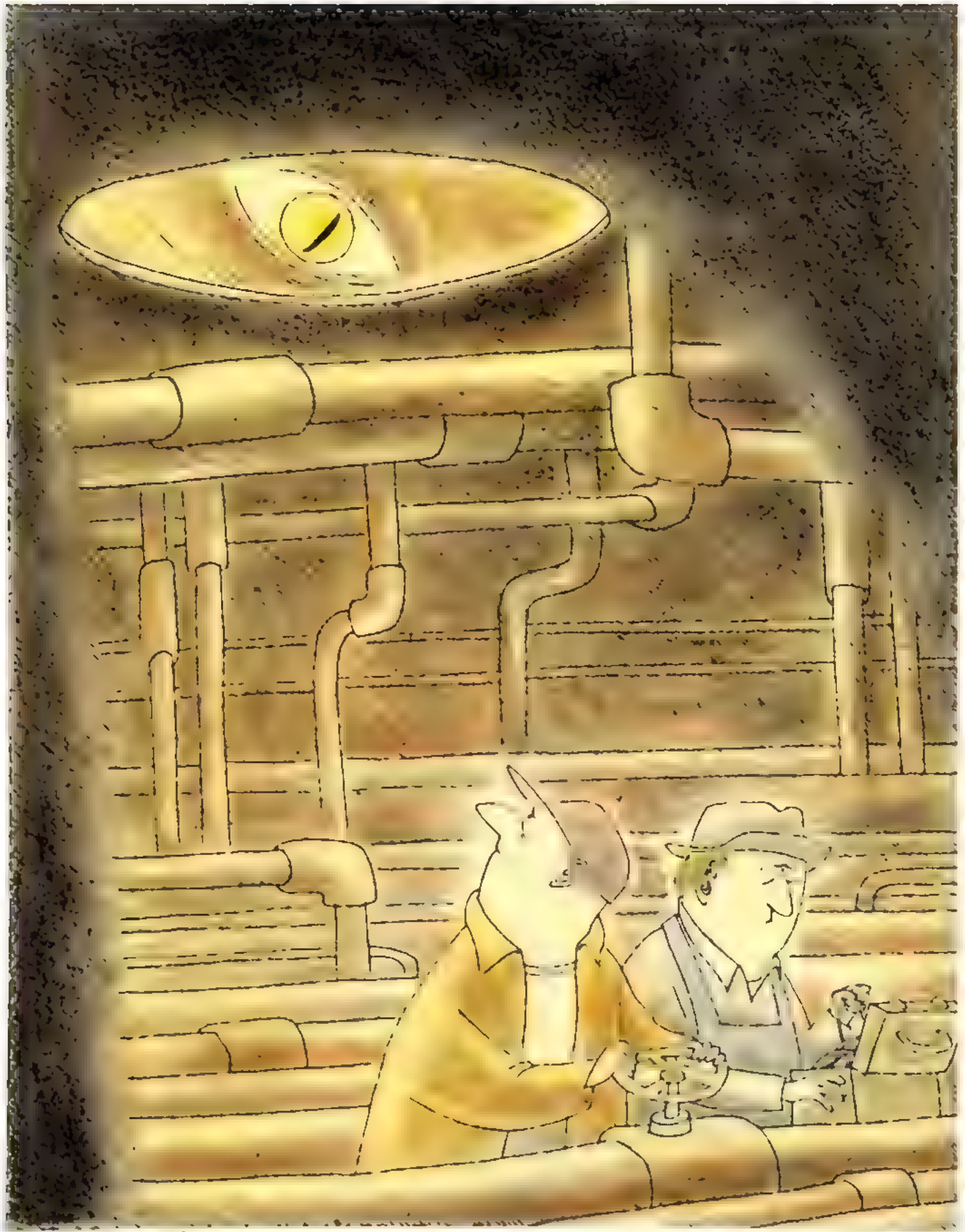
*"All we can do is continue offering sacrifices and hope
its magic power will return."*



Gahan Wilson



*"I must confess I've never seen such an unfortunate
side reaction to penicillin."*



Graham Wilson

"Meow...."



*"This might go a long way toward explaining how
they built the pyramids!"*



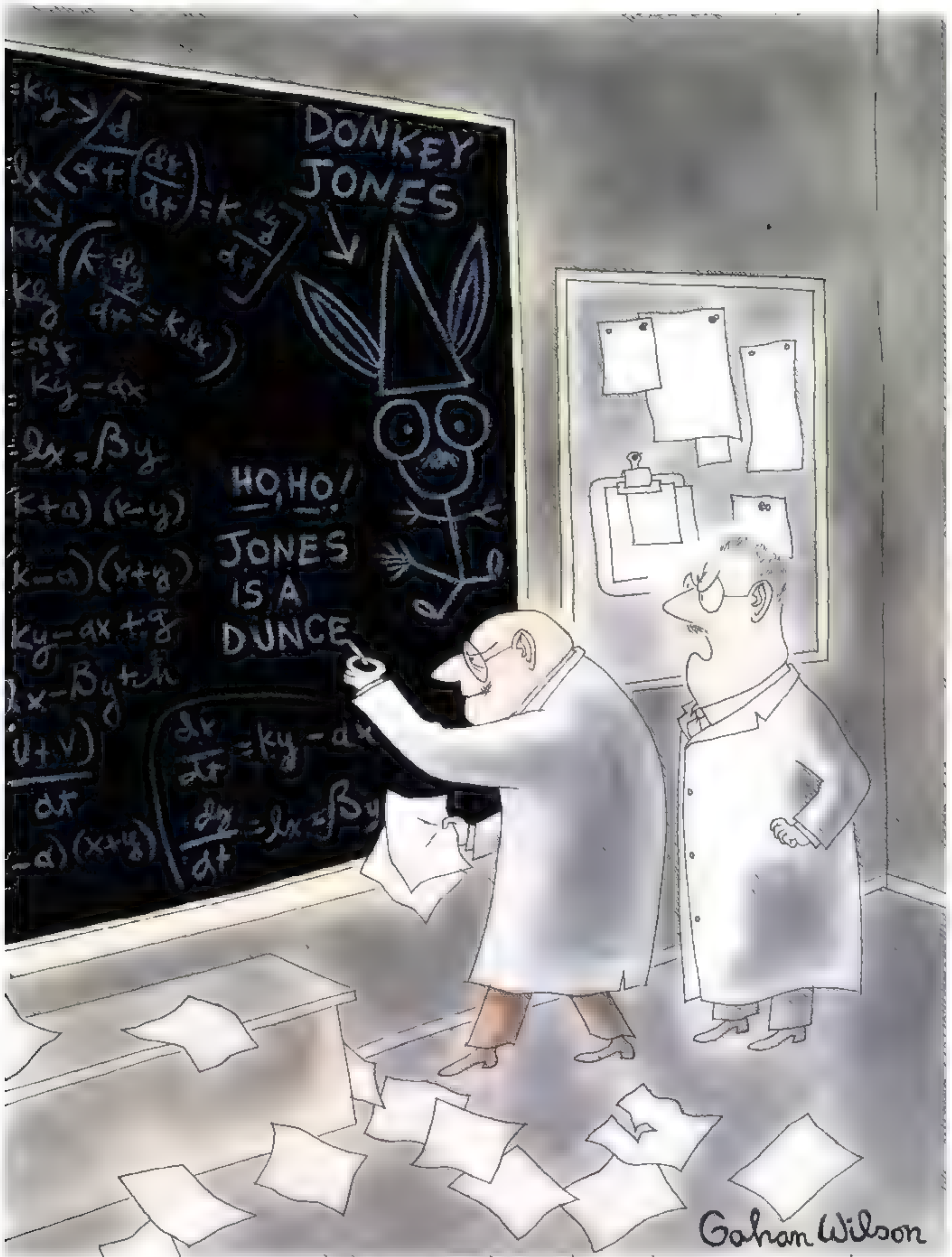
"I think I may have stumbled on something, Walpole."



"This will revolutionize the industry!"



"Oh, show some guts, Thorndike!"



"Very well, Carter, you've proven my theory faulty
—let it go at that!"





Gahan Wilson



"It's disgusting how they'll commercialize anything!"



Gahan Wilson

*"It develops we'll have no trouble producing
the new drug in large quantities, sir!"*



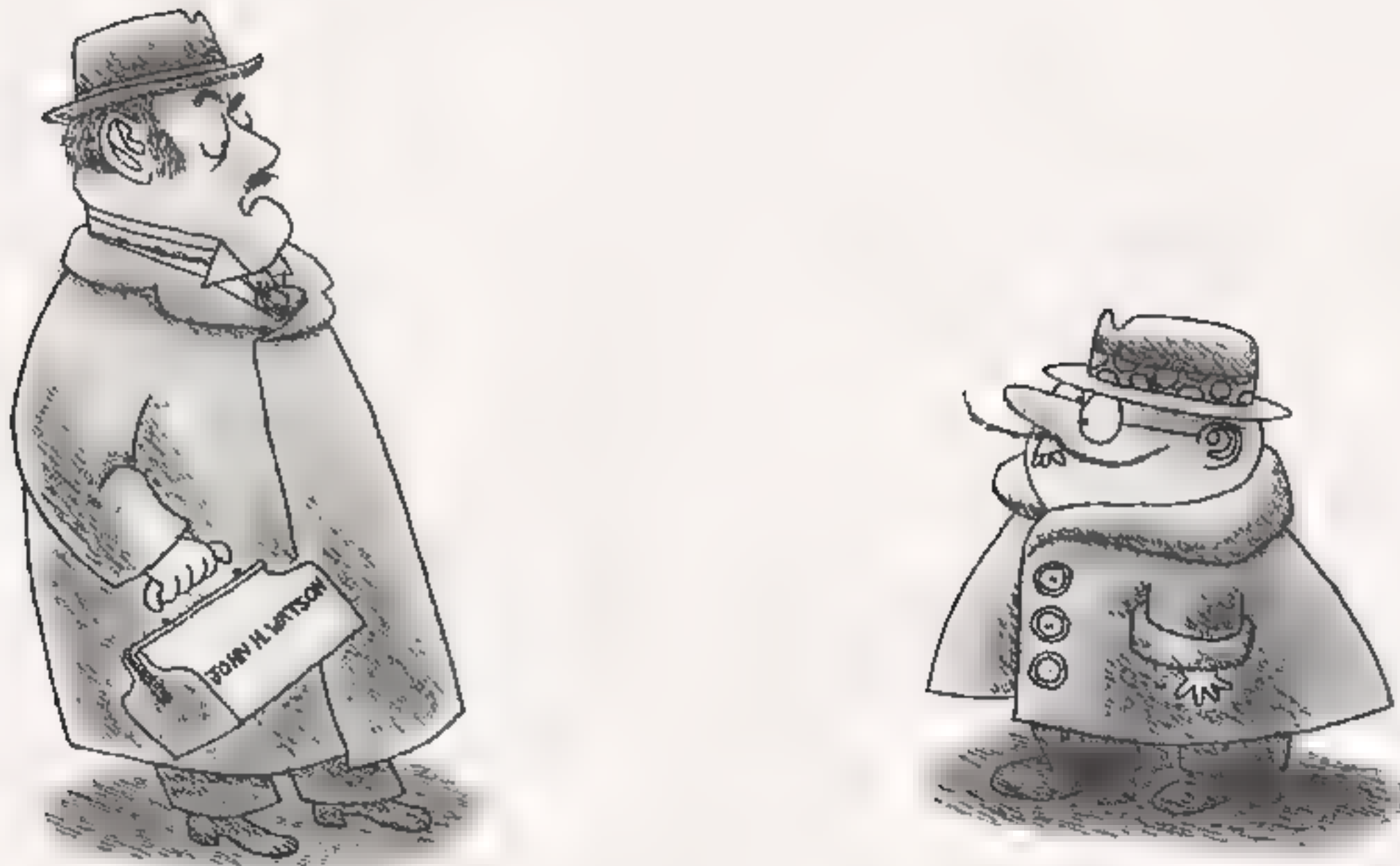
SHERLOCK



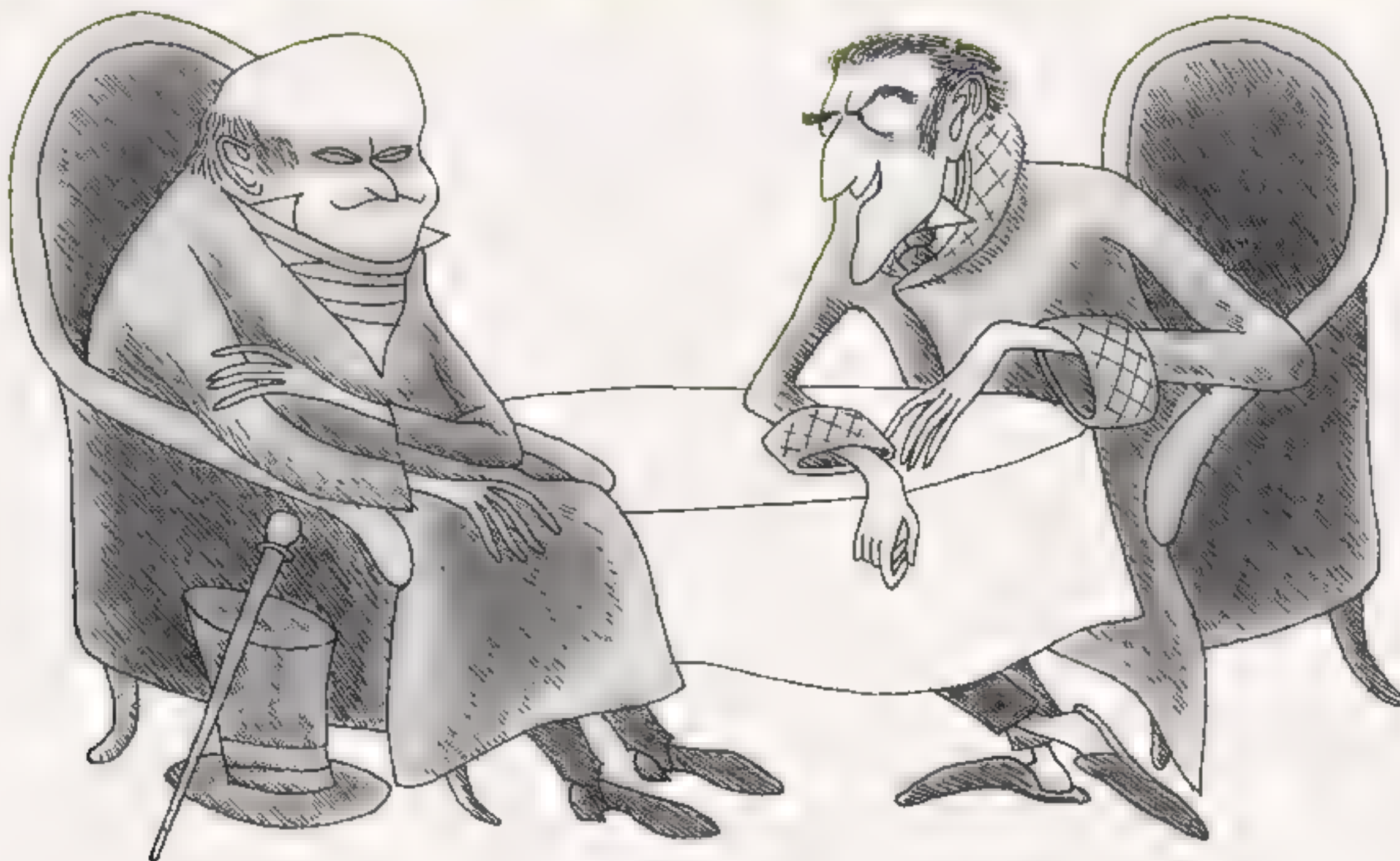
*"It strikes me you've made a great deal of bother
over very little, Baskerville"*



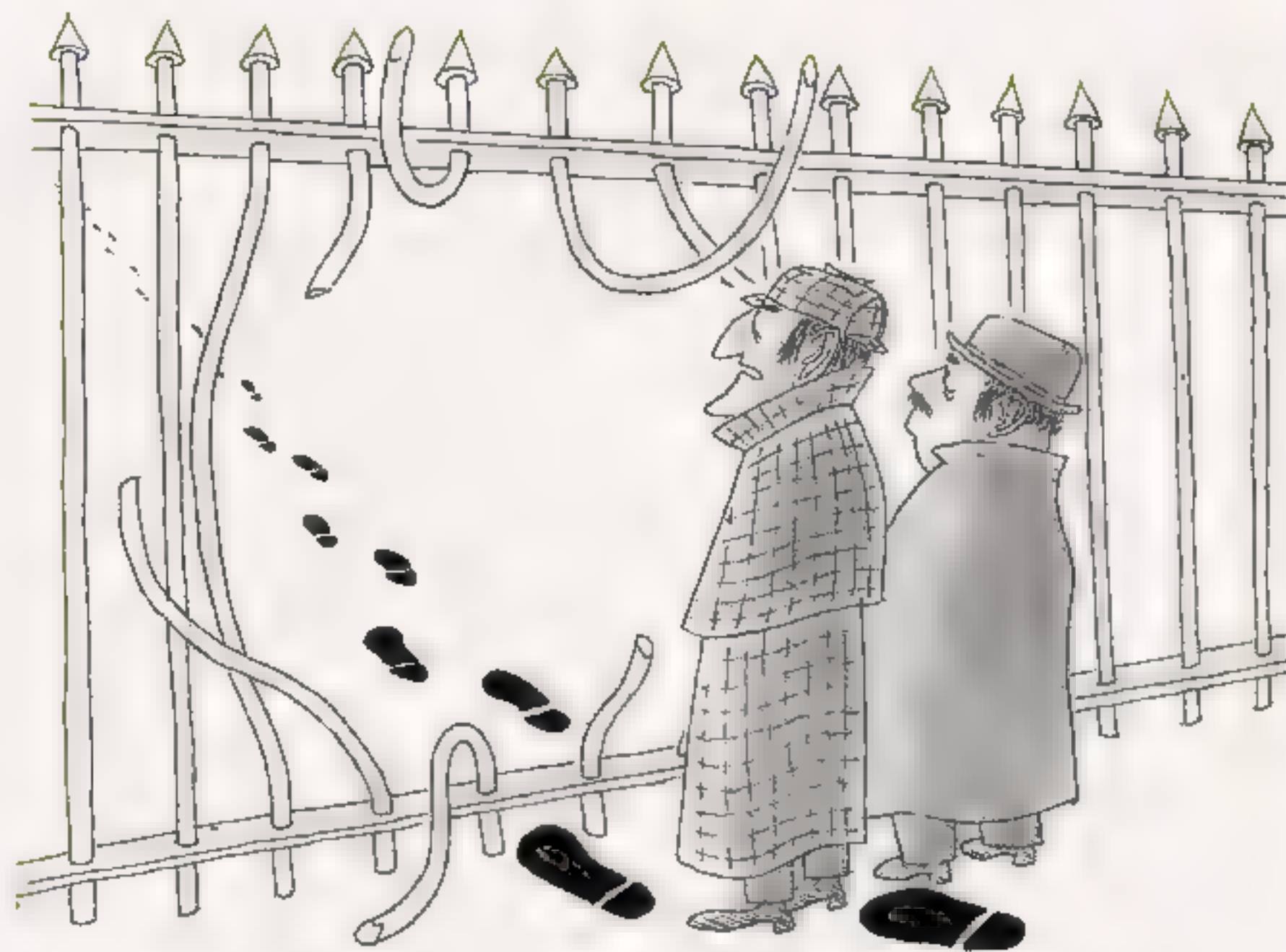
"That's hardly necessary!"



"Good Lord, Holmes—you are a master of disguise!"



"Of course we'll have to arrange some method of concealing our agreement from Watson, Professor Moriarty...."



"Perhaps we'd best wait for Inspector Lestrade."



"Extraordinary thing, Watson—the clues indicate the killer to have been a man of your exact build and appearance!"

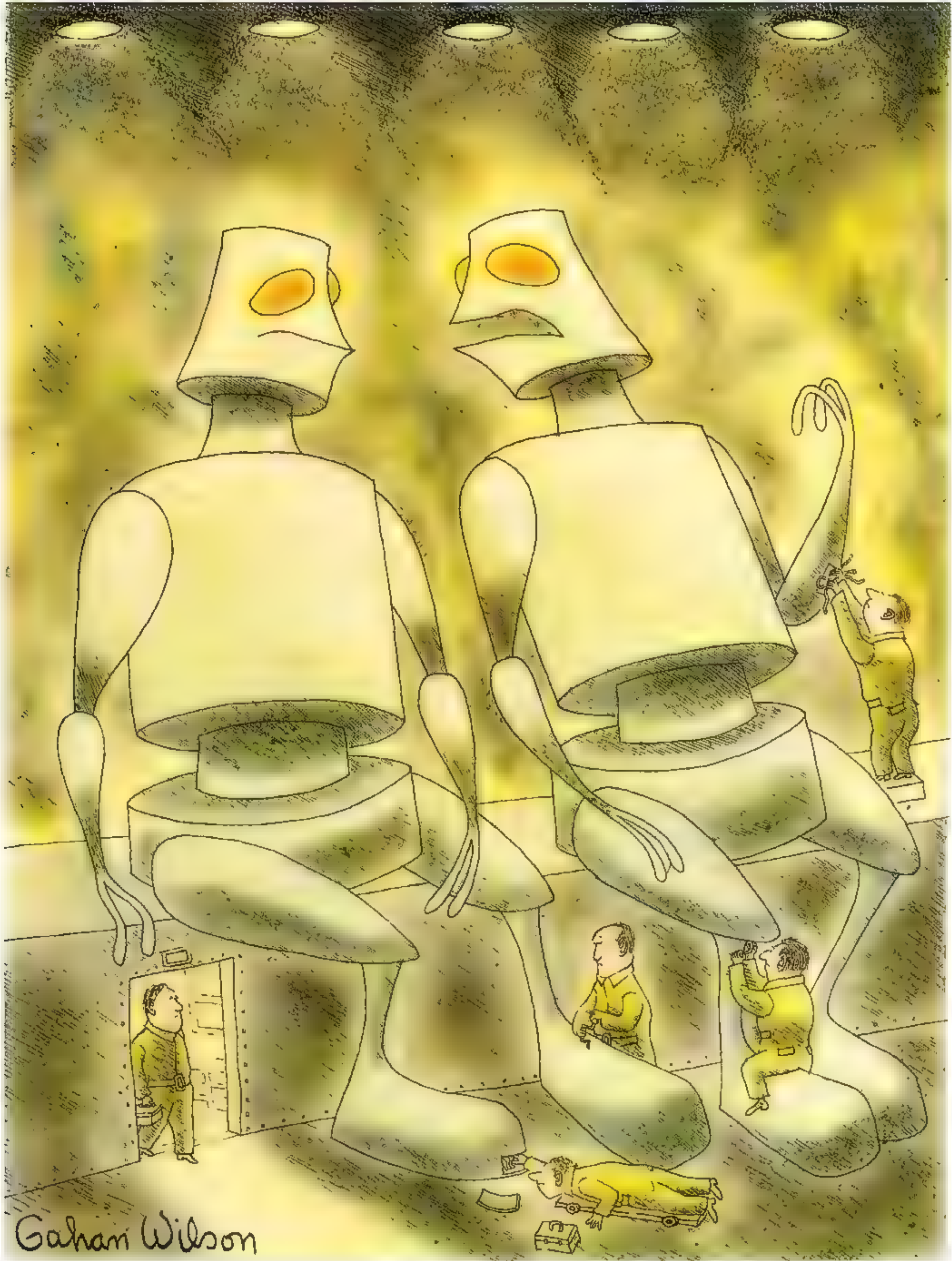
221 B



Gahan Wilson

"Old Jack Frost nipping at your nose, eh?"

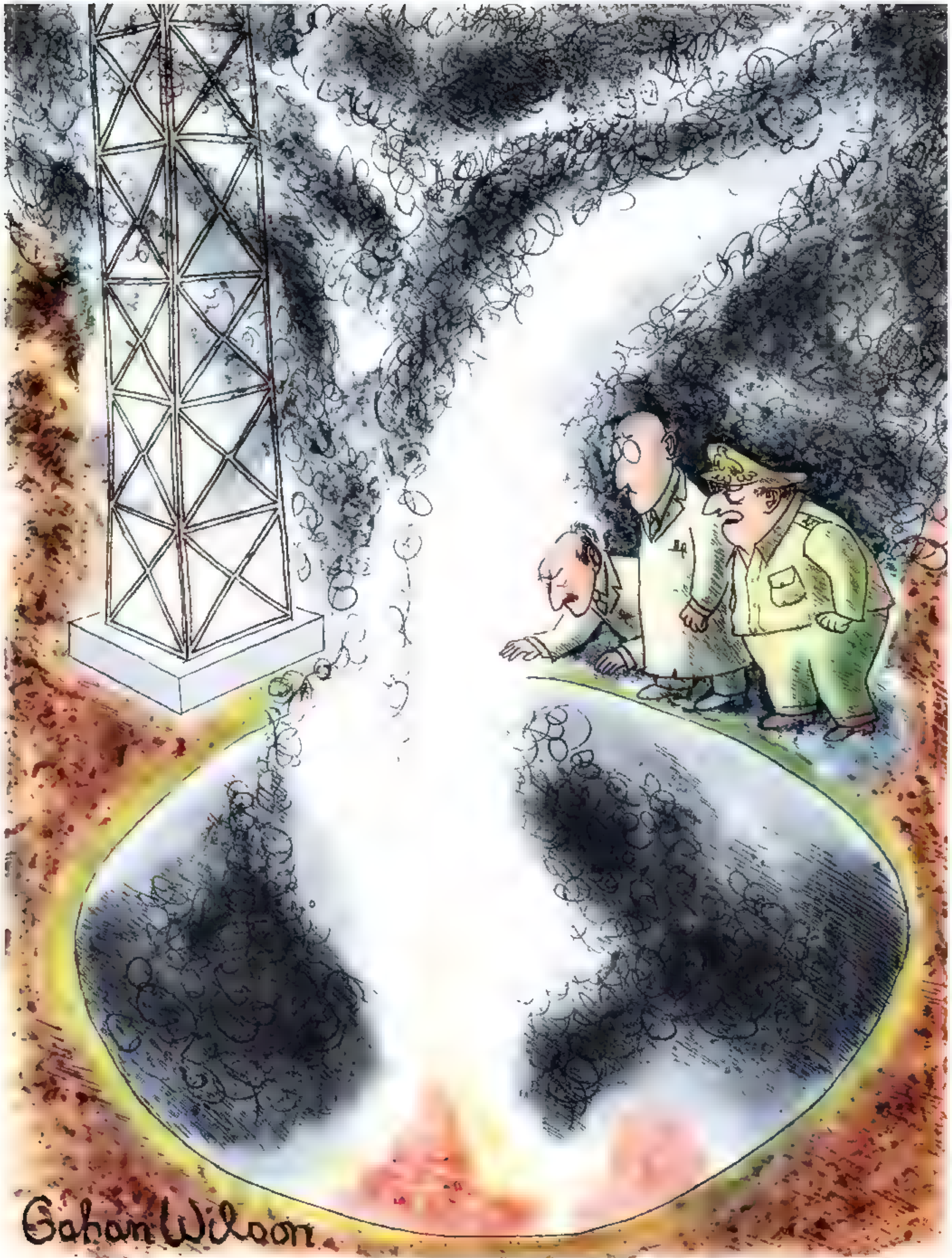




"Sure, they're handy little things to have around, but you can't deny they're potentially dangerous."



*"My great-great-grandfather was forced to flee Europe
because of religious persecution."*



"Damn it—I didn't even know a rocket could go into reverse."

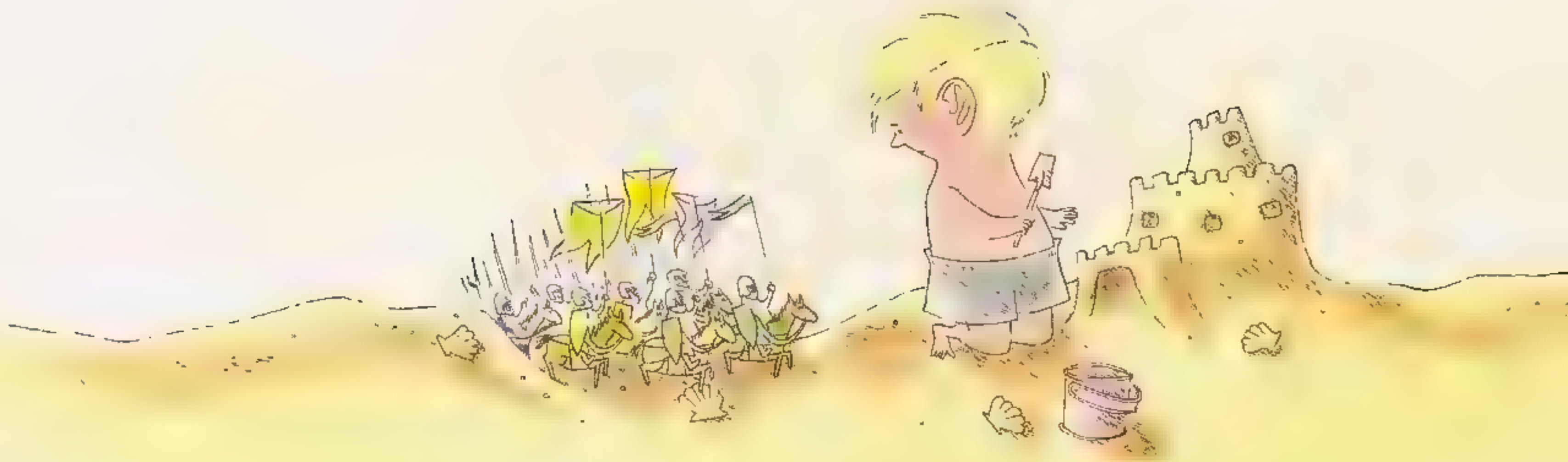


Gahan Wilson

"It's working, chief!"



Graham Wilson



ON THE BEACH WITH GAHAN WILSON:
Sandy Smiles from Our Seer of the Strange & Inexplicable



"I don't trust this, Mr. Sween—it's altogether too simple!"



Gahan Wilson

"You called?"



Gahan Wilson

*"That's the city for you—you live next to someone for years
and never even catch a glimpse of them."*



"Hold everything, Louis!"



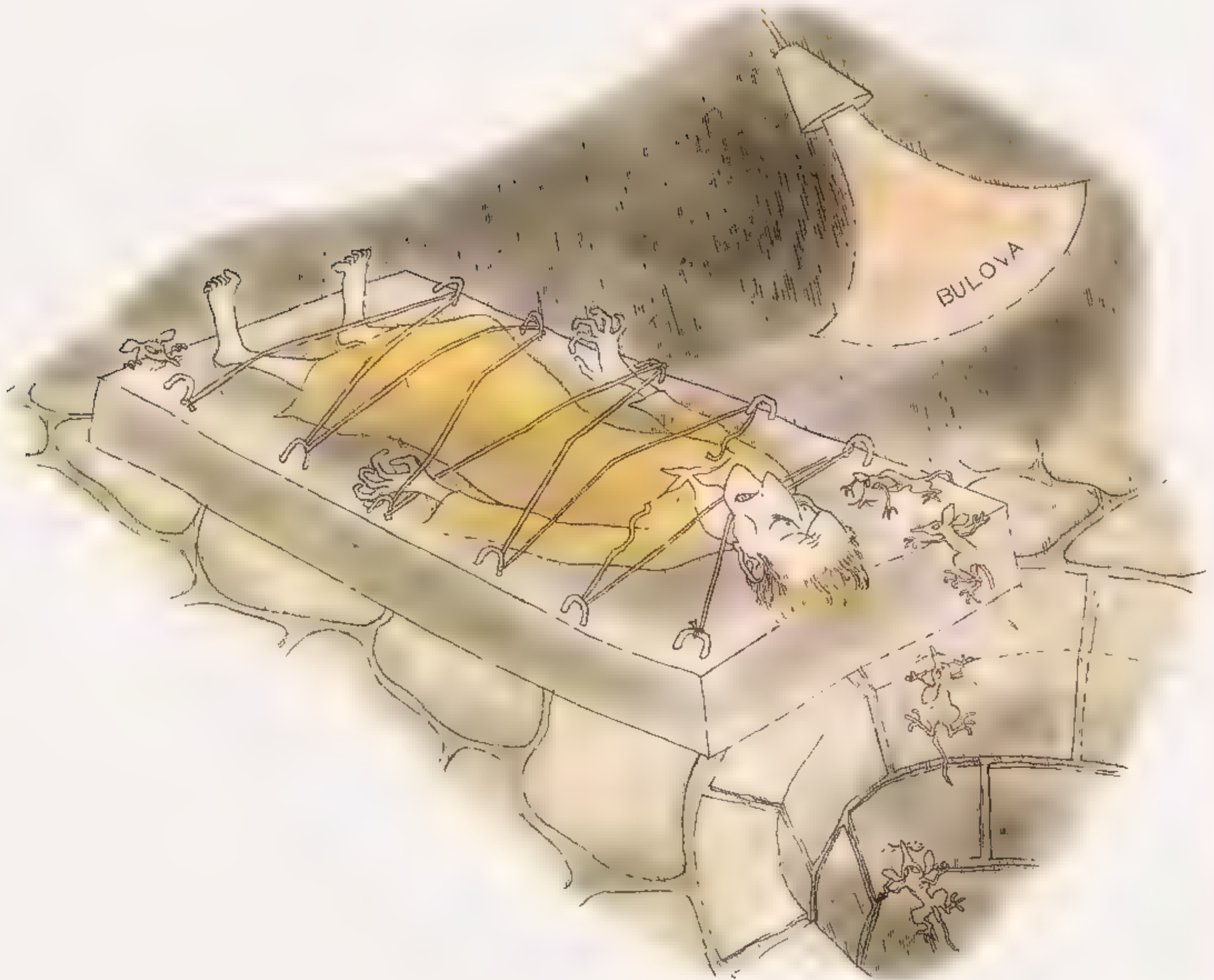
Gahan Wilson

"They could at least have hanged us in effigy!!"



*"I'm sorry, sir, but Professor Dornley does not wish to
be distracted for the duration of the winter."*

*Playboy's Favorite Ghoul Revisits
Edgar Allen Poe's Old Haunts*





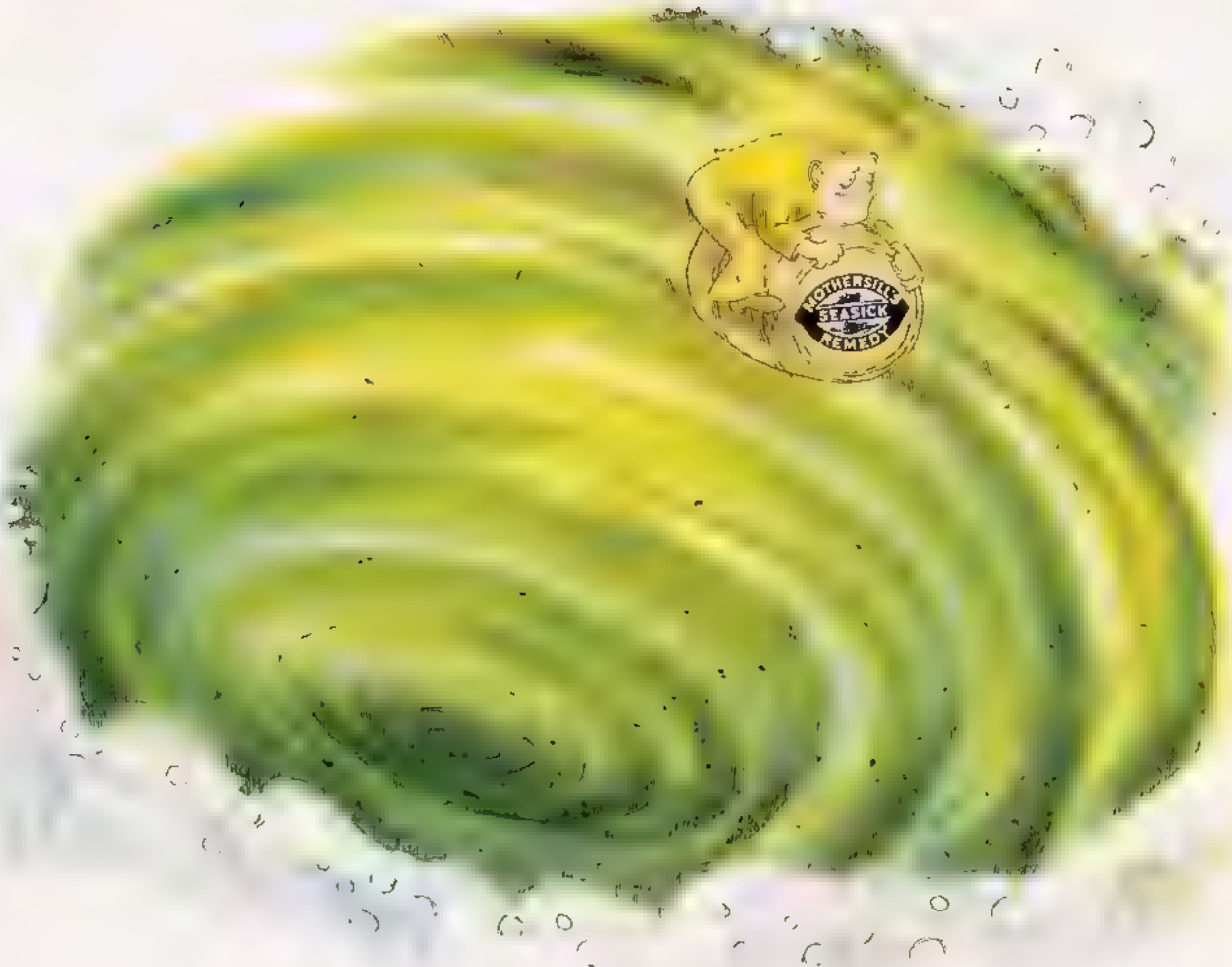
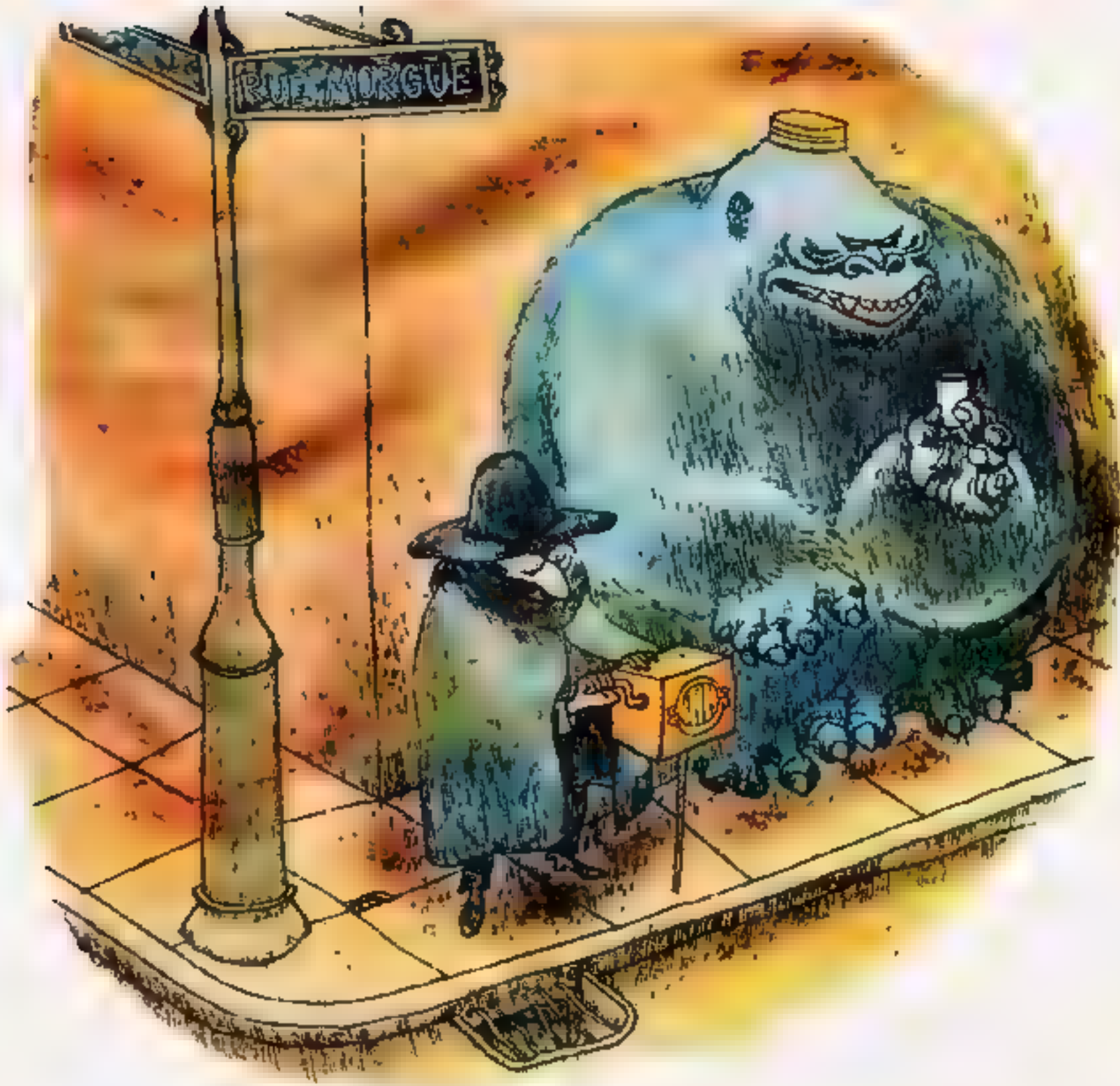
"I think I have just the house for you, Mr. Usher."



*"Well, you certainly managed to spoil that party
for just about everybody!"*



*"It's really none of my business, Montresor, but are you sure
you're going about this in the right way?"*

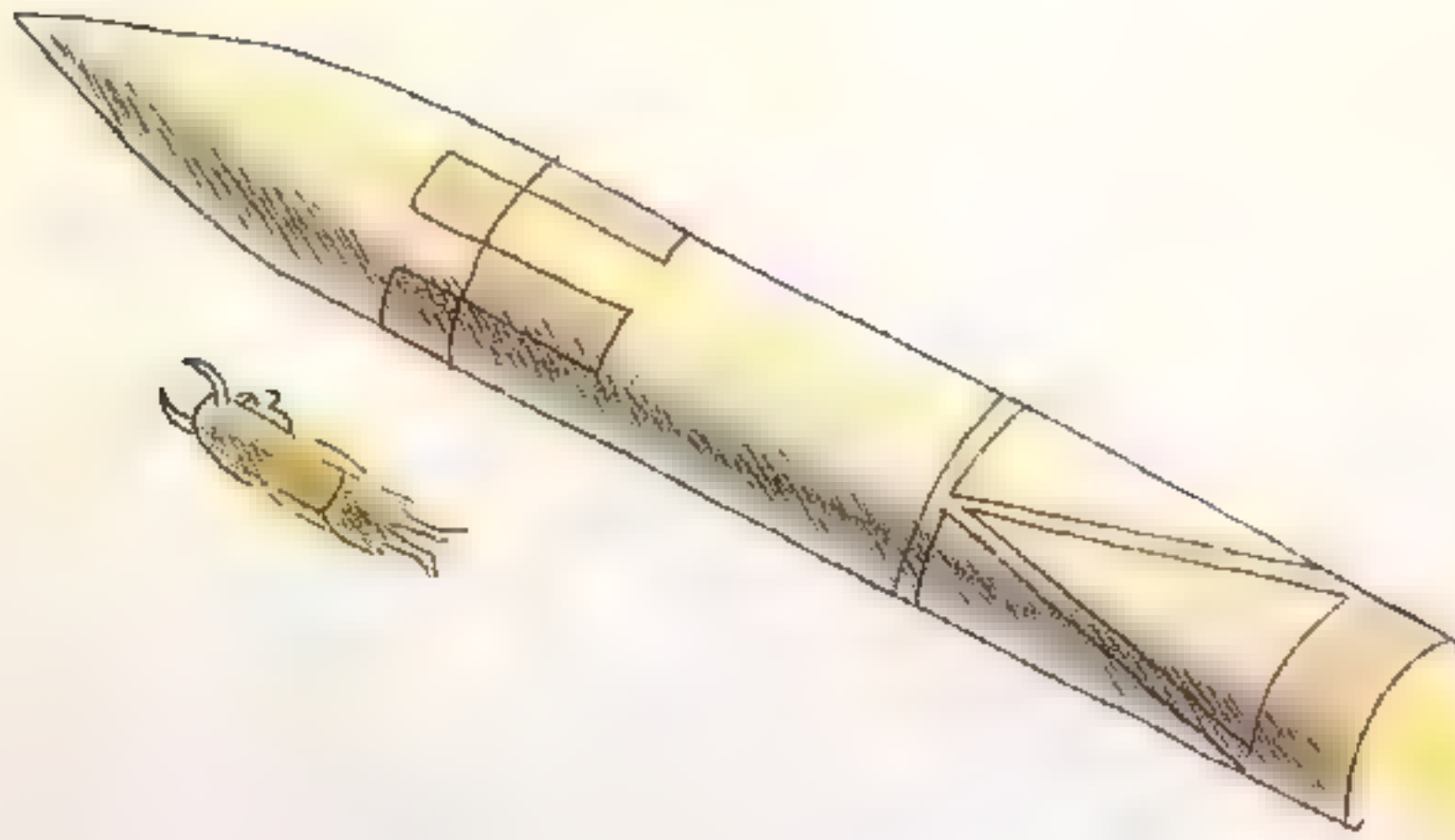




*"Will you please cut the 'Alas, poor Yorick' bit
and open that chest?"*



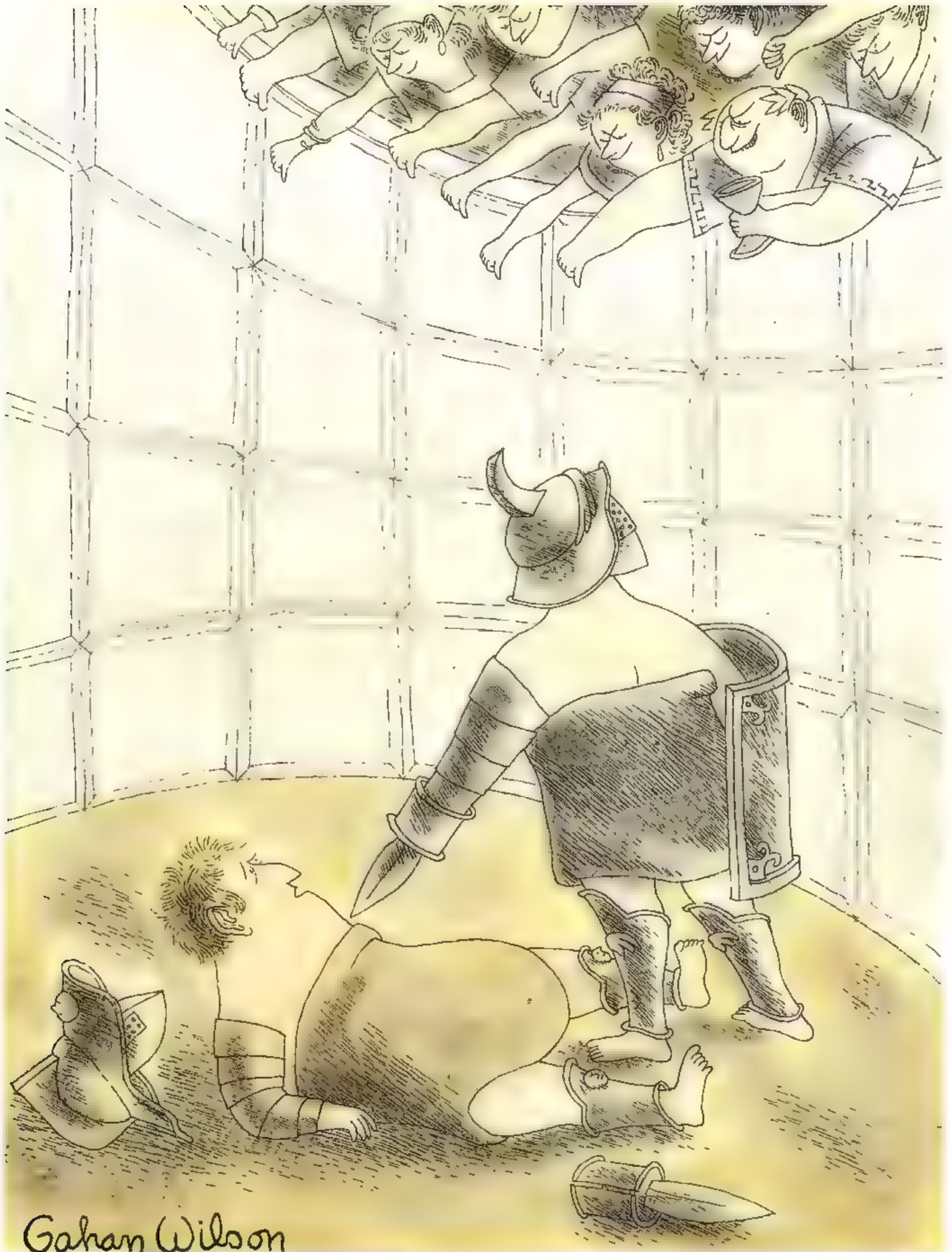
*“Why, there’s nothing wrong with the old gentleman —
his heart is as sound as a dollar!”*



*"I hope you don't mind Umboko going along to
observe your fire god, bwana."*



"We're here, Harry."



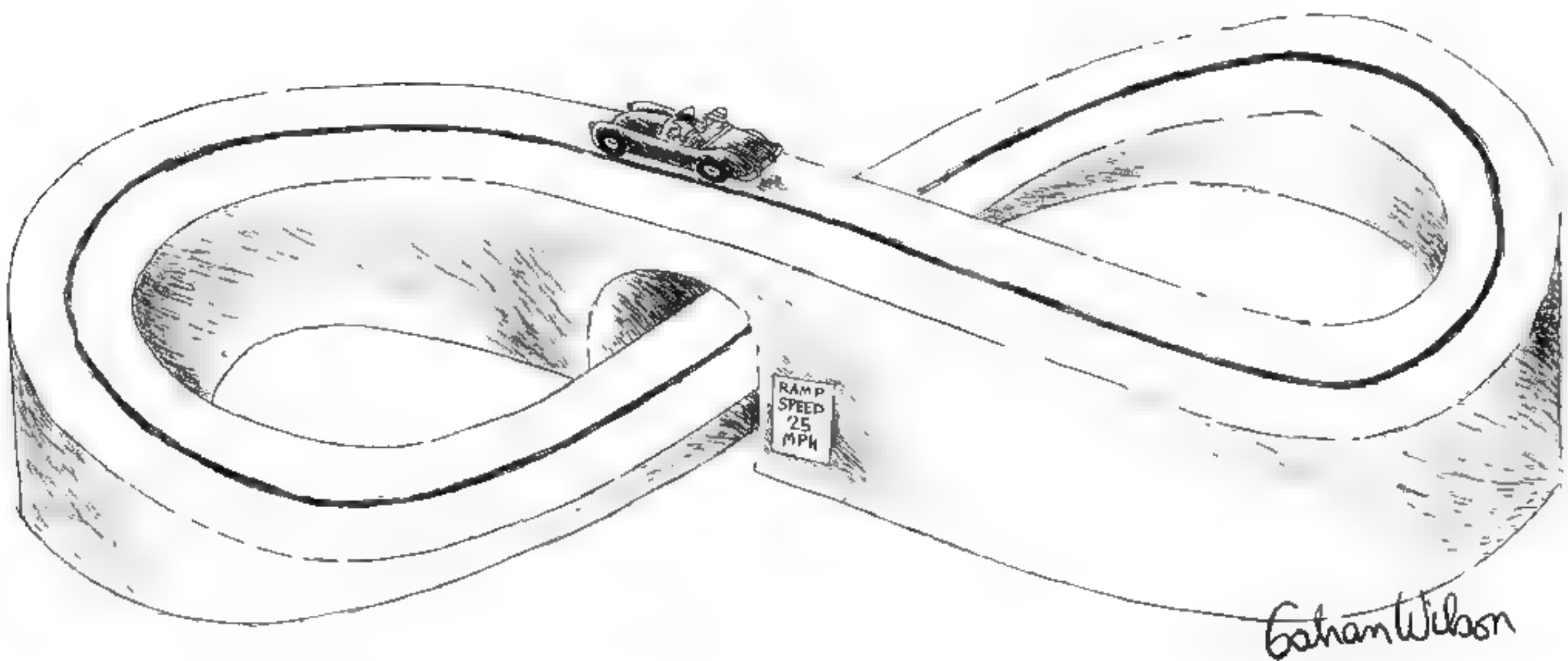
"Well—that's showbiz!"



"It looks like we can't expect much in the way of benign guidance."



"Oh, for heaven's sake, Fenner—let the chips fall where they may!"



"I can't figure how we got on it in the first place."



"Too bad—the kid had talent."





"I'll take that one."

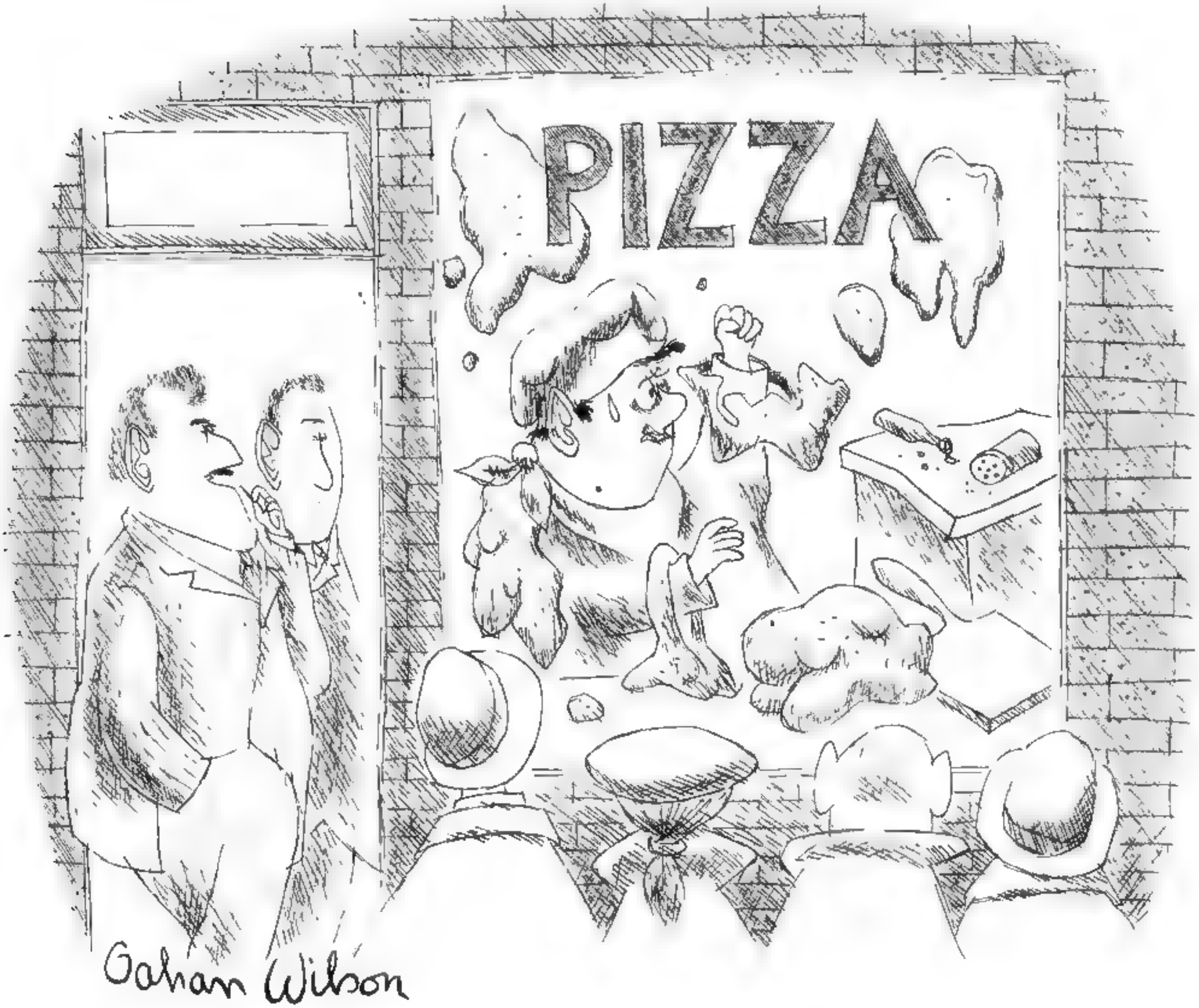


*"When did you first become aware of this imagined
'plot to get you,' Mr. Potter?"*



Gahan Wilson

You're really crazy about that girl, aren't you, kid?"



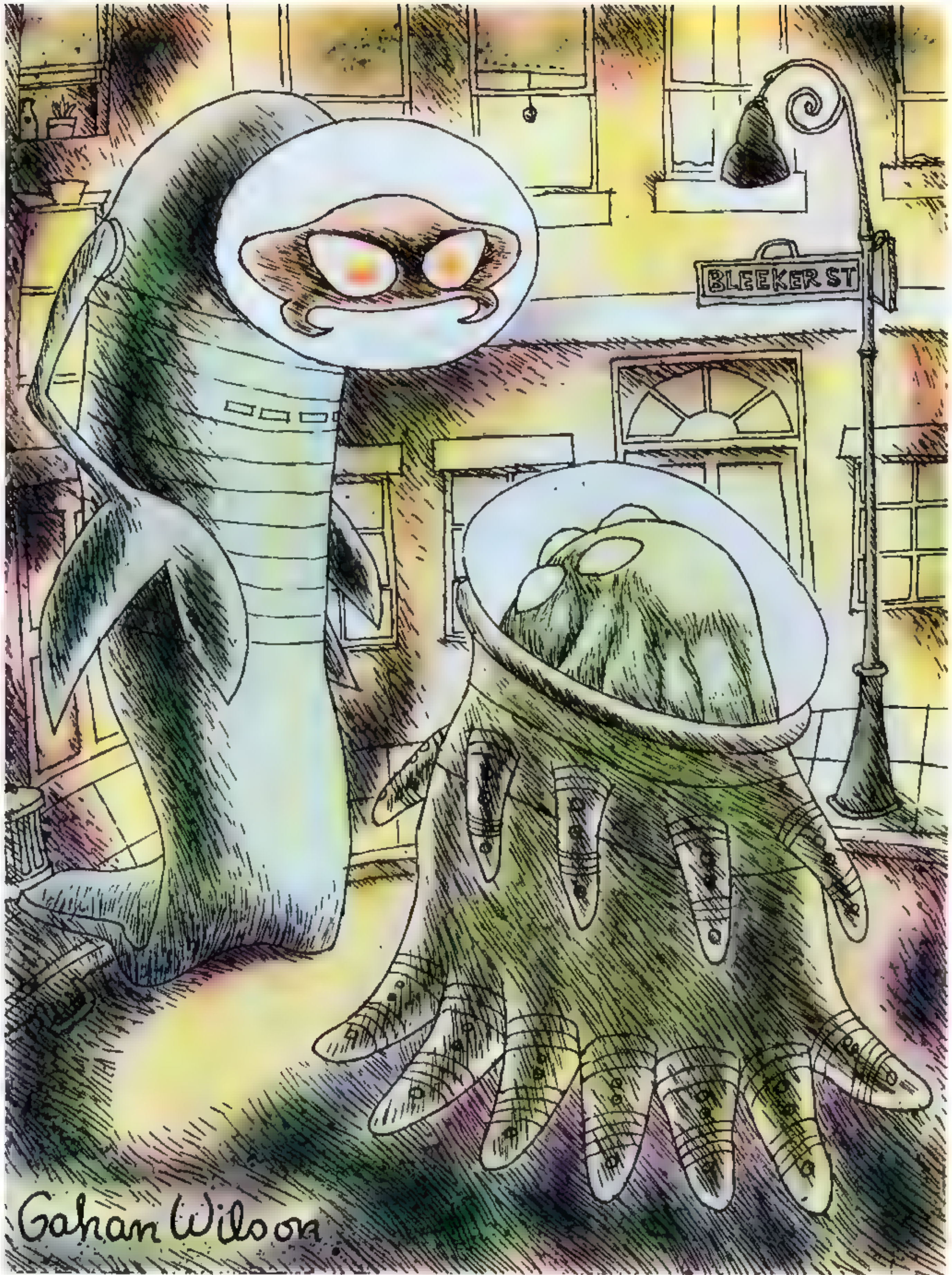
"The kid's not much with pizza—but he's a real crowd pleaser."



*"You know very well you're not supposed
to beg at the table."*



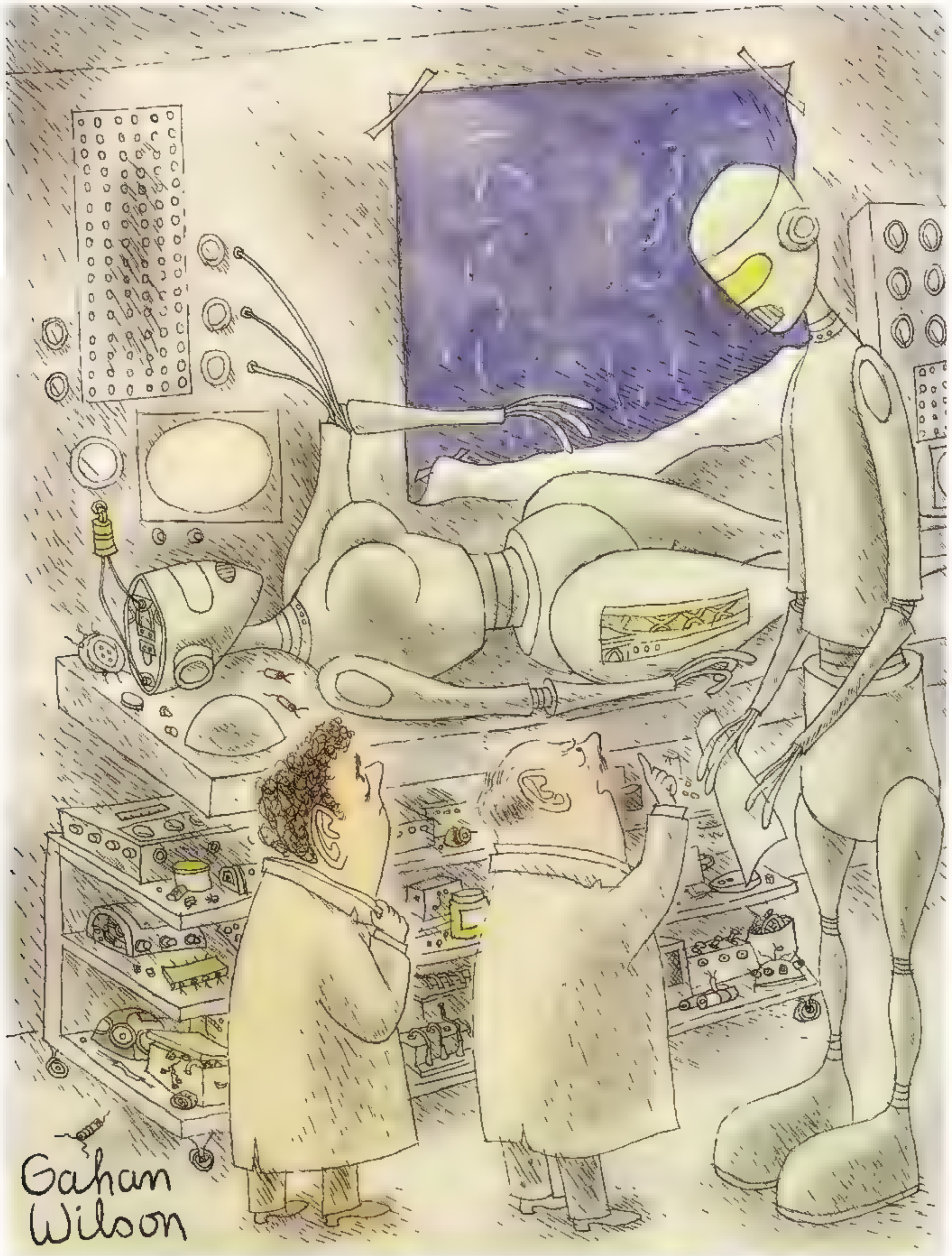
*"Looks like we didn't get the screens up
none too soon, Pa."*



"I couldn't say—I'm a stranger here myself."



*"Time after time it's the same thing: you hear a knock
—you open the door—and nobody's there!"*

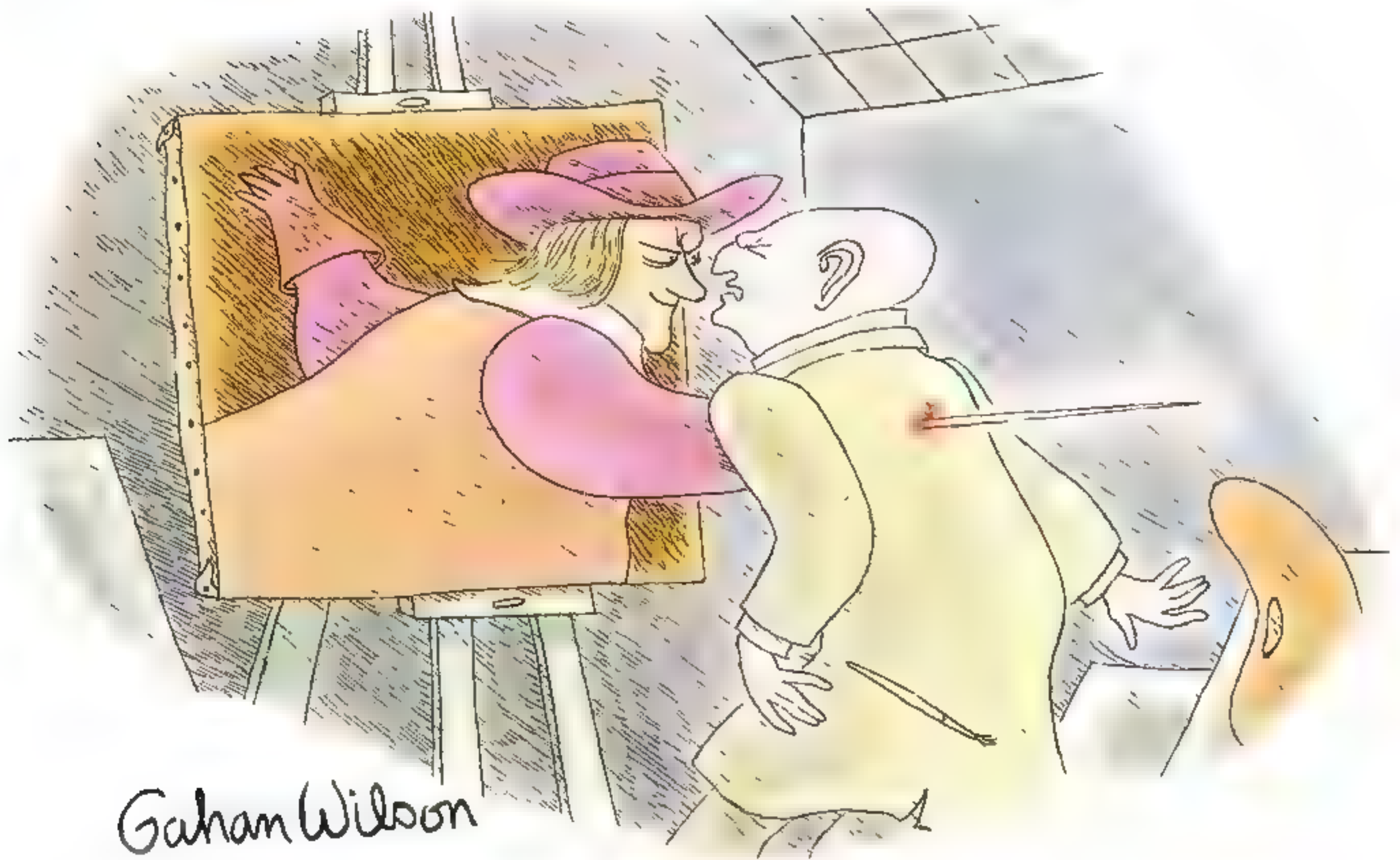
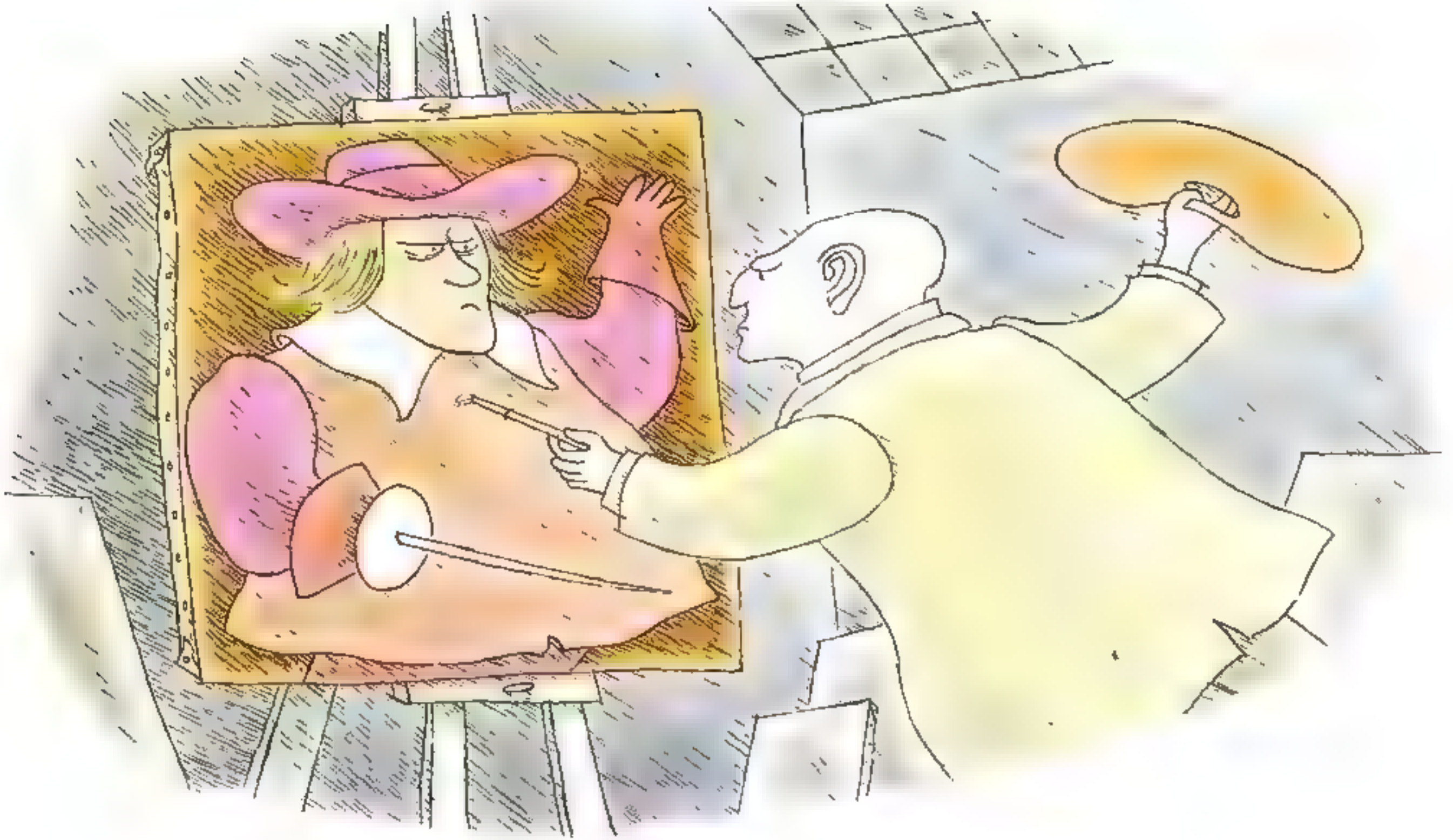


"Henceforth I don't want you to start any new projects without consulting Professor Frankfurter or myself!"

YES, WE CATER
TO A RATHER
SPECIALIZED
CLIENTELE.

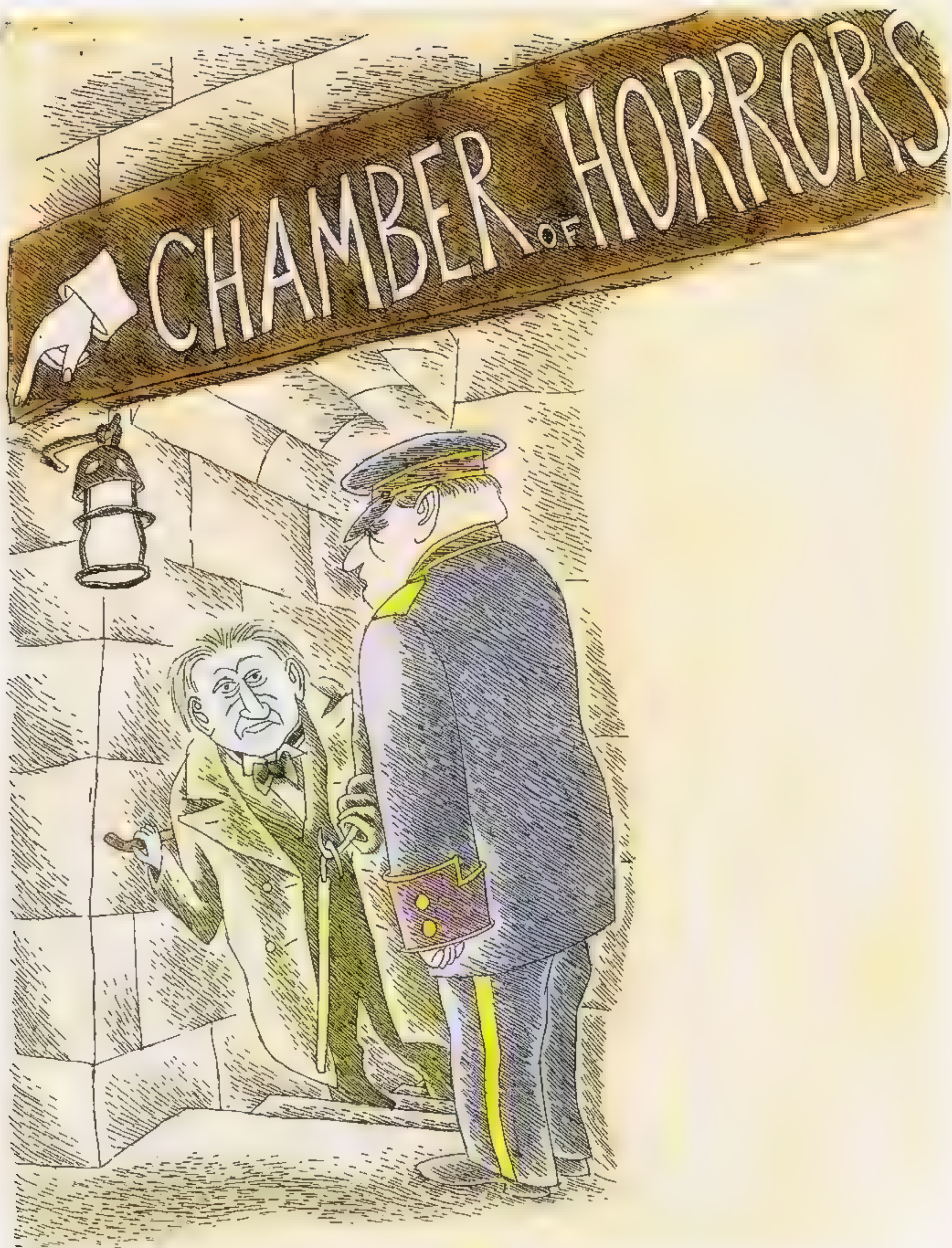
① ② ③





Gahan Wilson





"You know very well it's a good ten minutes till closing, Charlie."

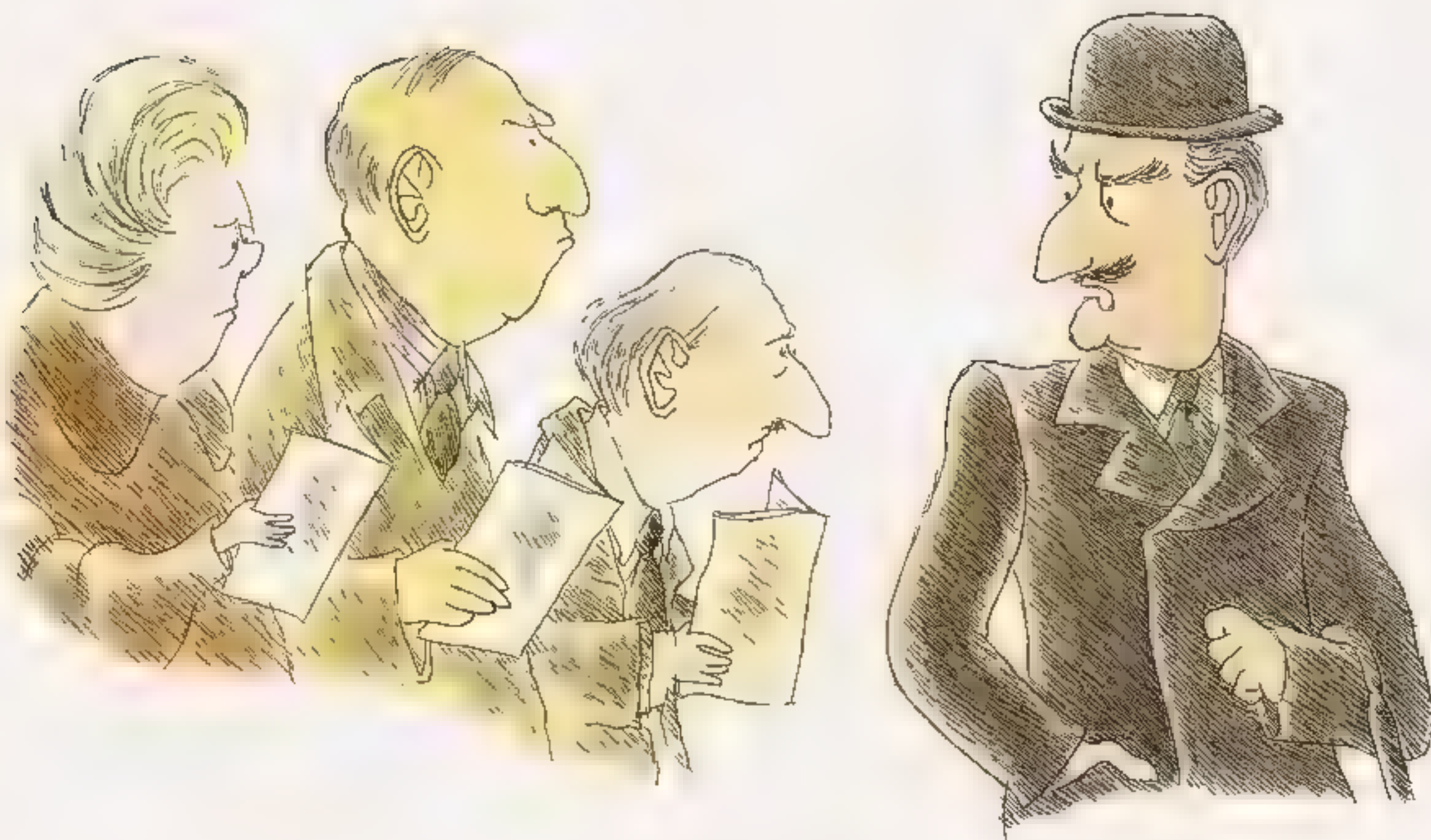
*Playboy's Master of the Macabre
Explores England's Famed Wax Museum*



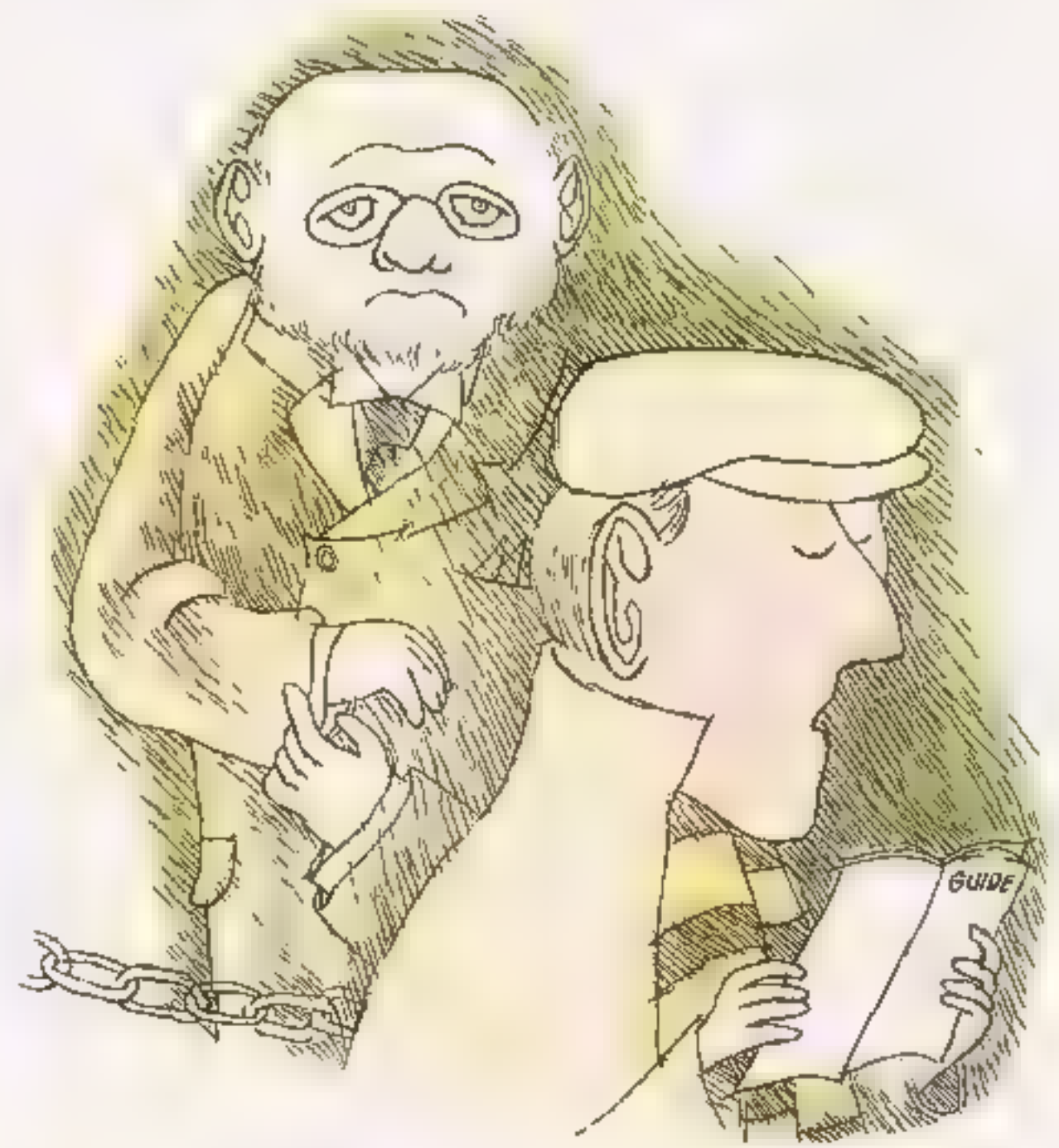
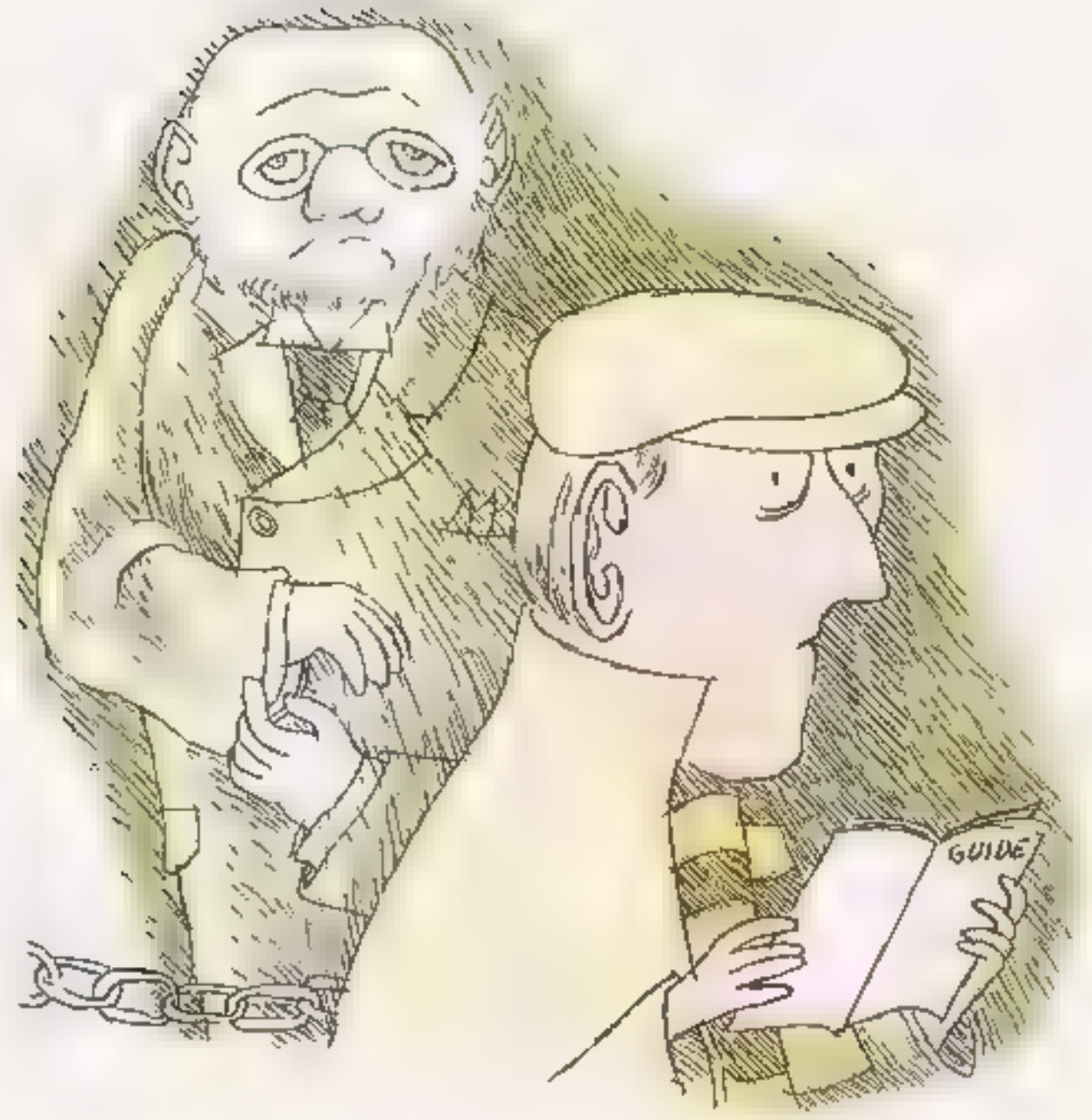
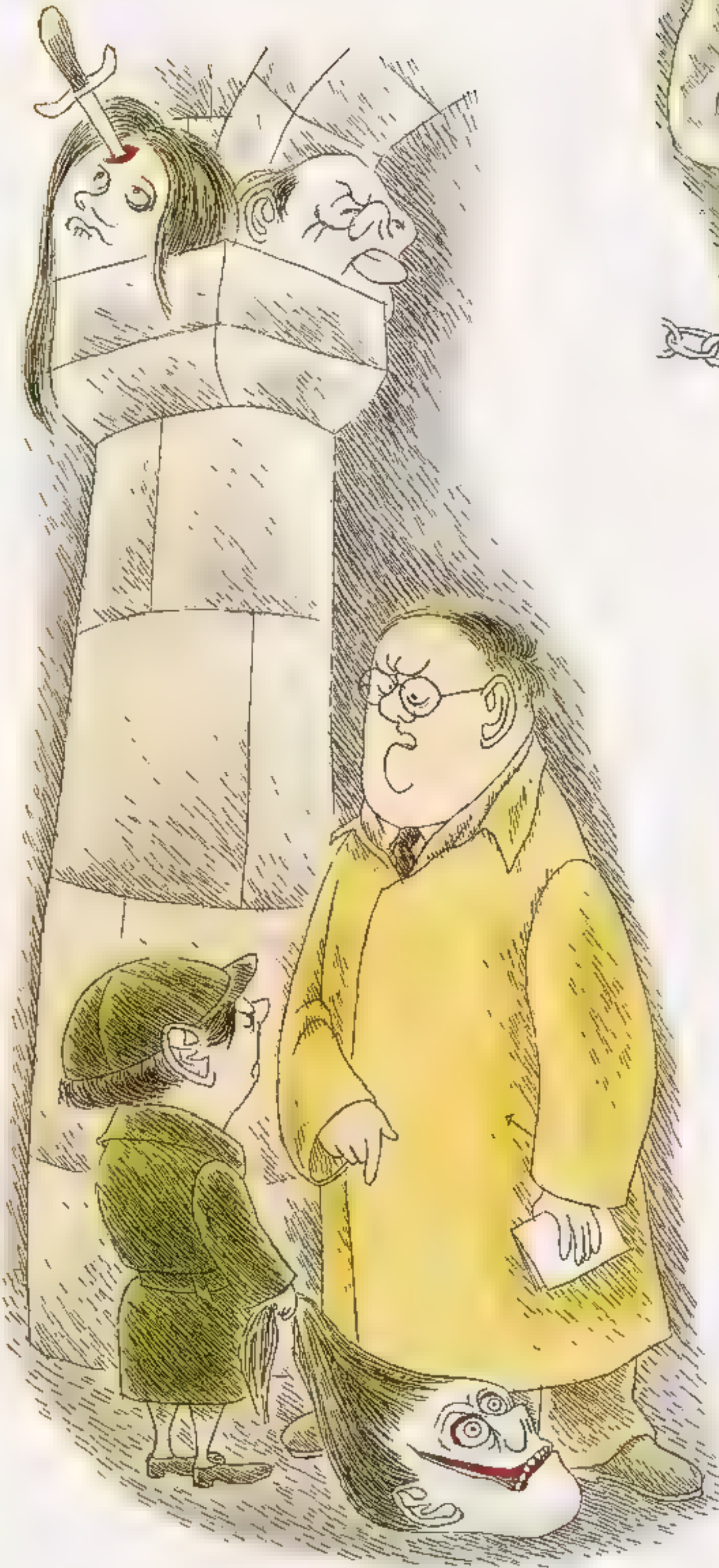
"Now, Claude, you know it's only just some kind of silly mistake!"



"I suppose it's because he was very naughty."



"Would you mind?"



"Gesundheit."

"You put that right back where you found it."



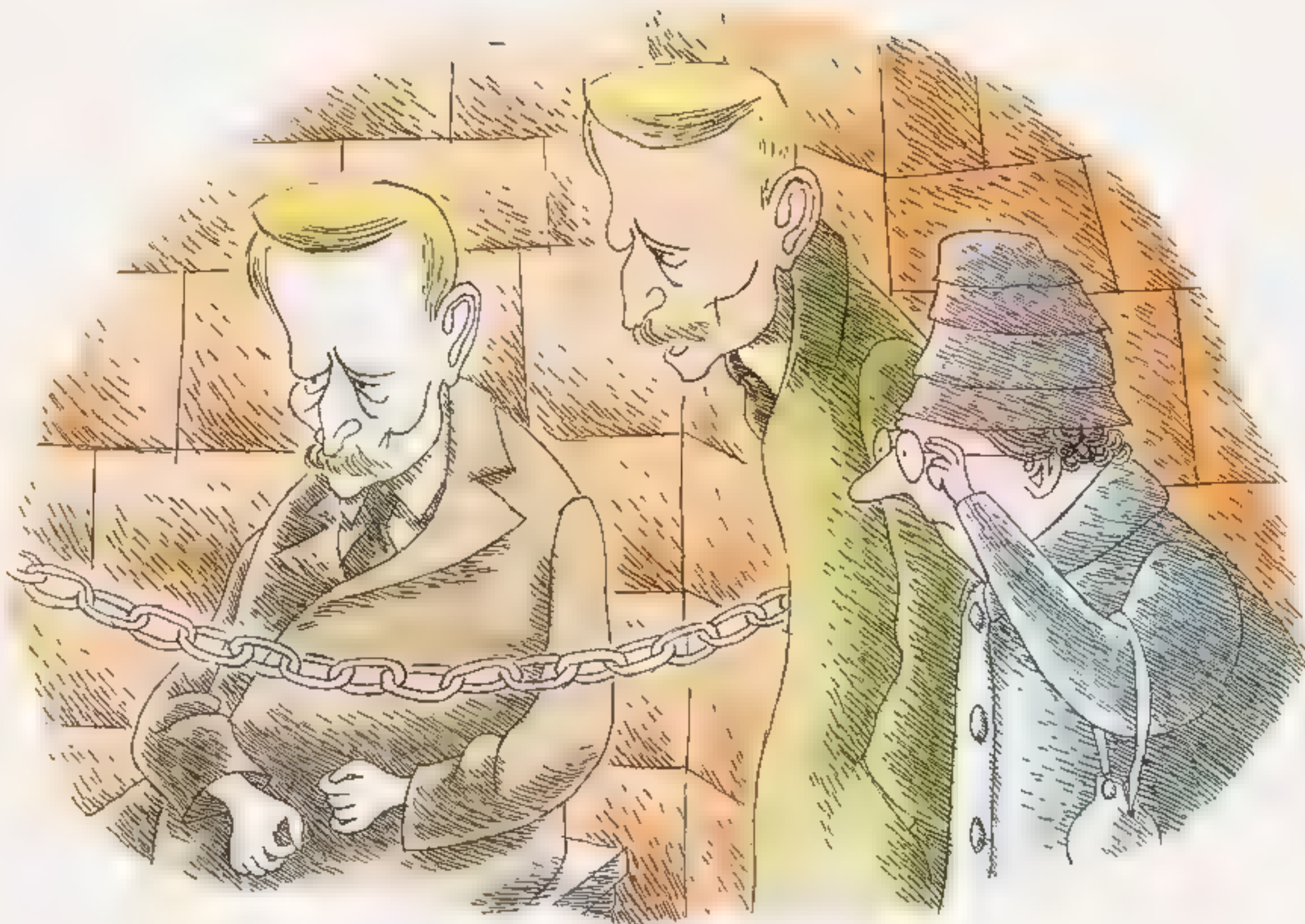
"Sorry, sir. All entries must be approved by the management."



"I swear to God, lady—I'm not part of the exhibit!"



*"Have you noticed the one who seems to be looking at you
no matter where you go in the room?"*



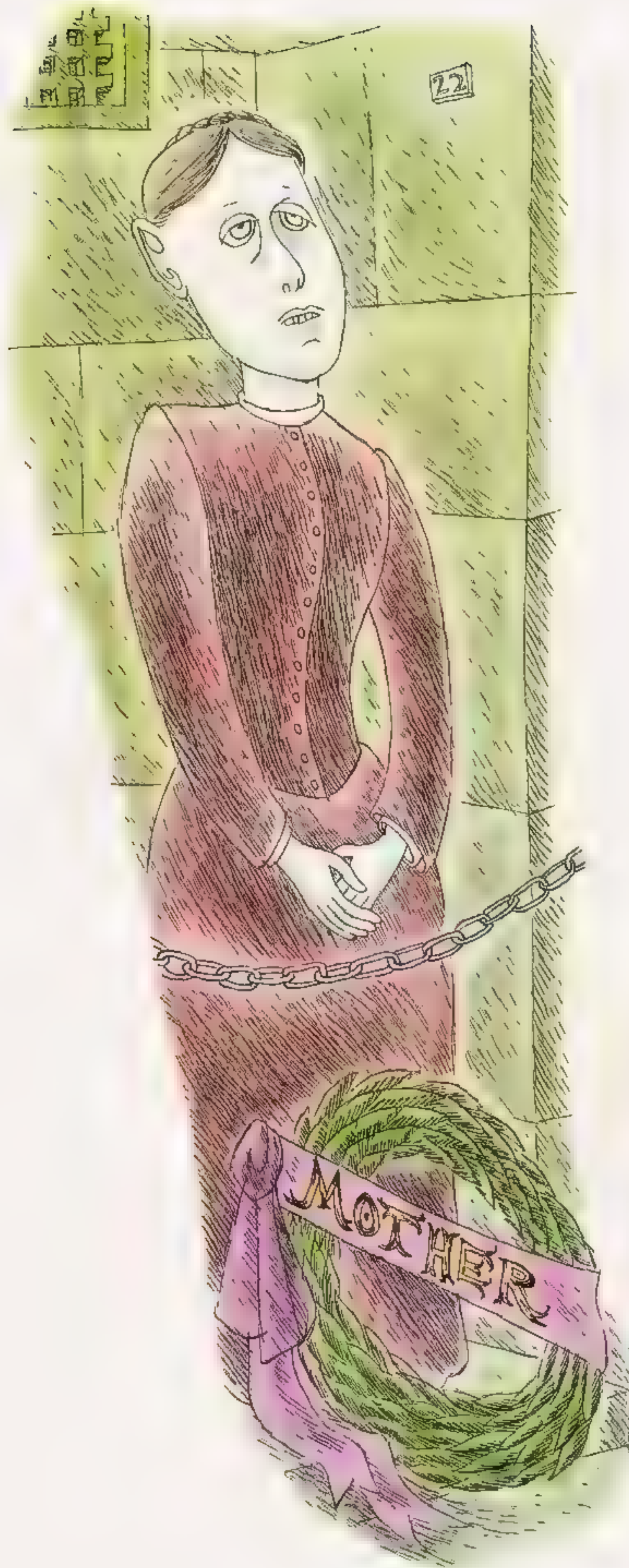
*"E don't look at all the sort of bloke what would strangle 'is wife,
chop 'er up into little bitty pieces and scatter 'er all over town, do 'e?"*

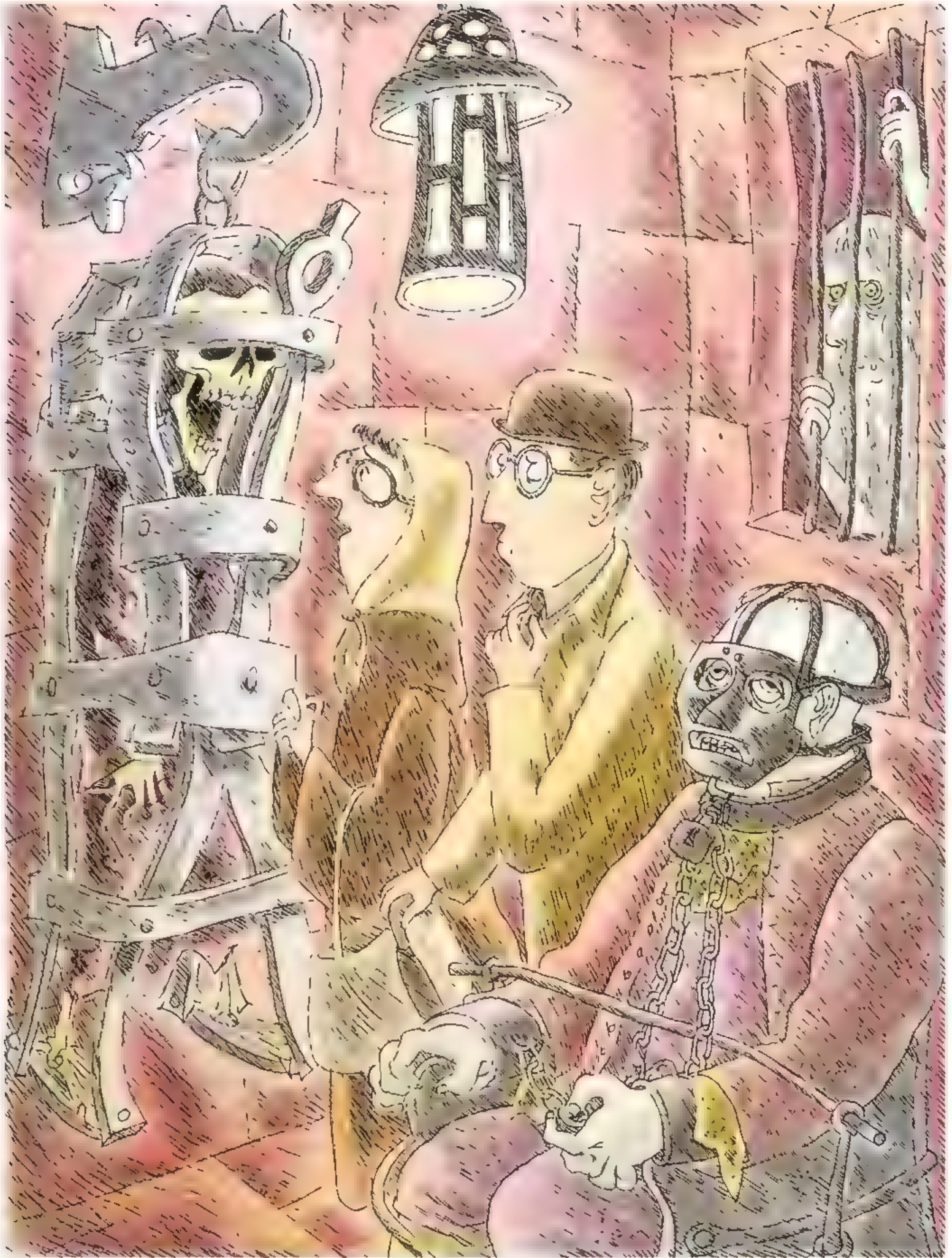


"Well, I certainly can't say I like the looks of him!"



"Convinced?"





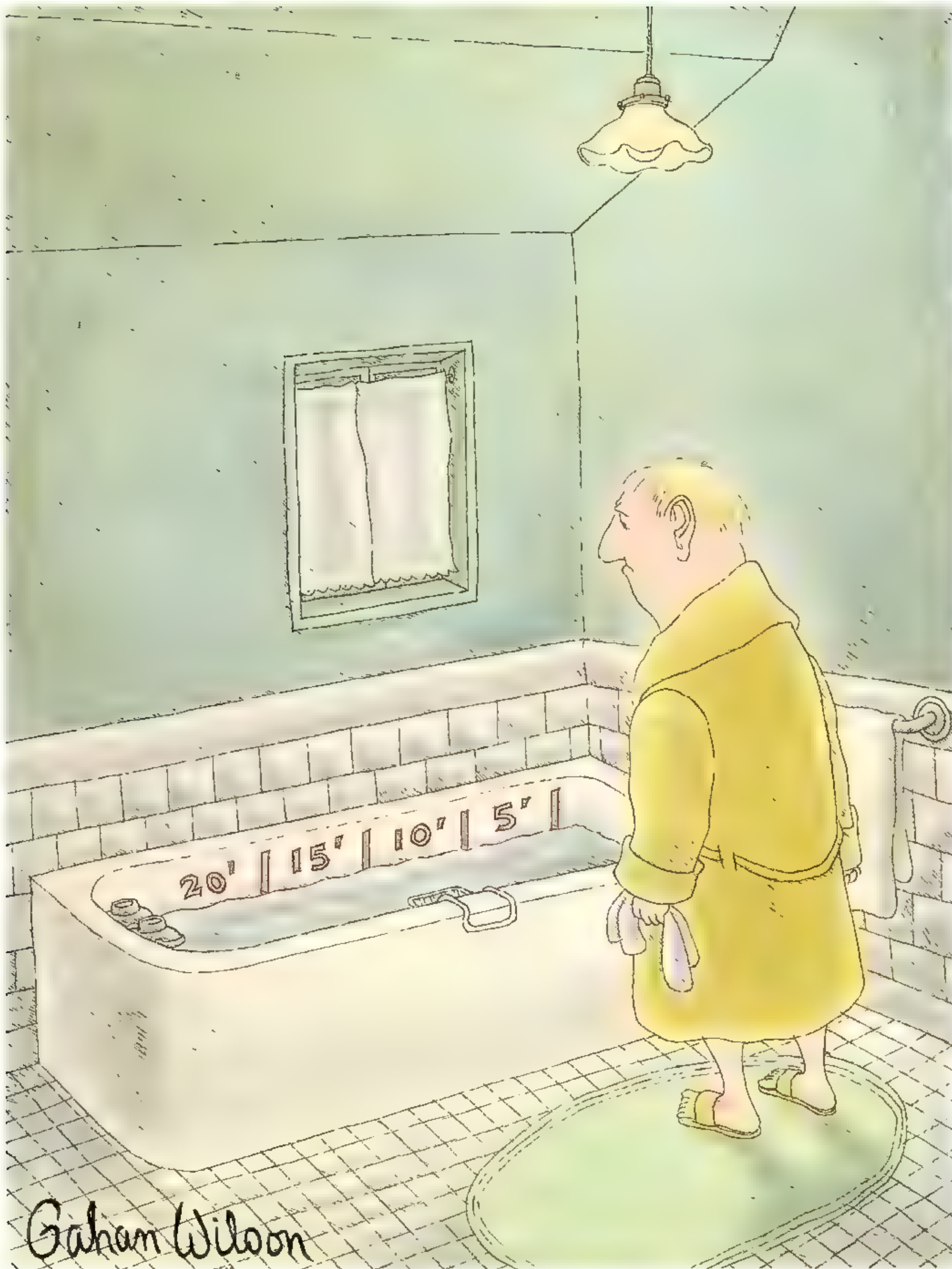
"It's no good, Bertie—we must either find some other place to meet or break off the affair altogether."



*"Well, Willie, I understand you've been
a bad boy this year!"*



"Gee, Marshal, he must have been one of the good guys"



Gahan Wilson



"Disney will flip!"

Gahan Wilson



"Well, just when can you call for it, Mr. Harper?"



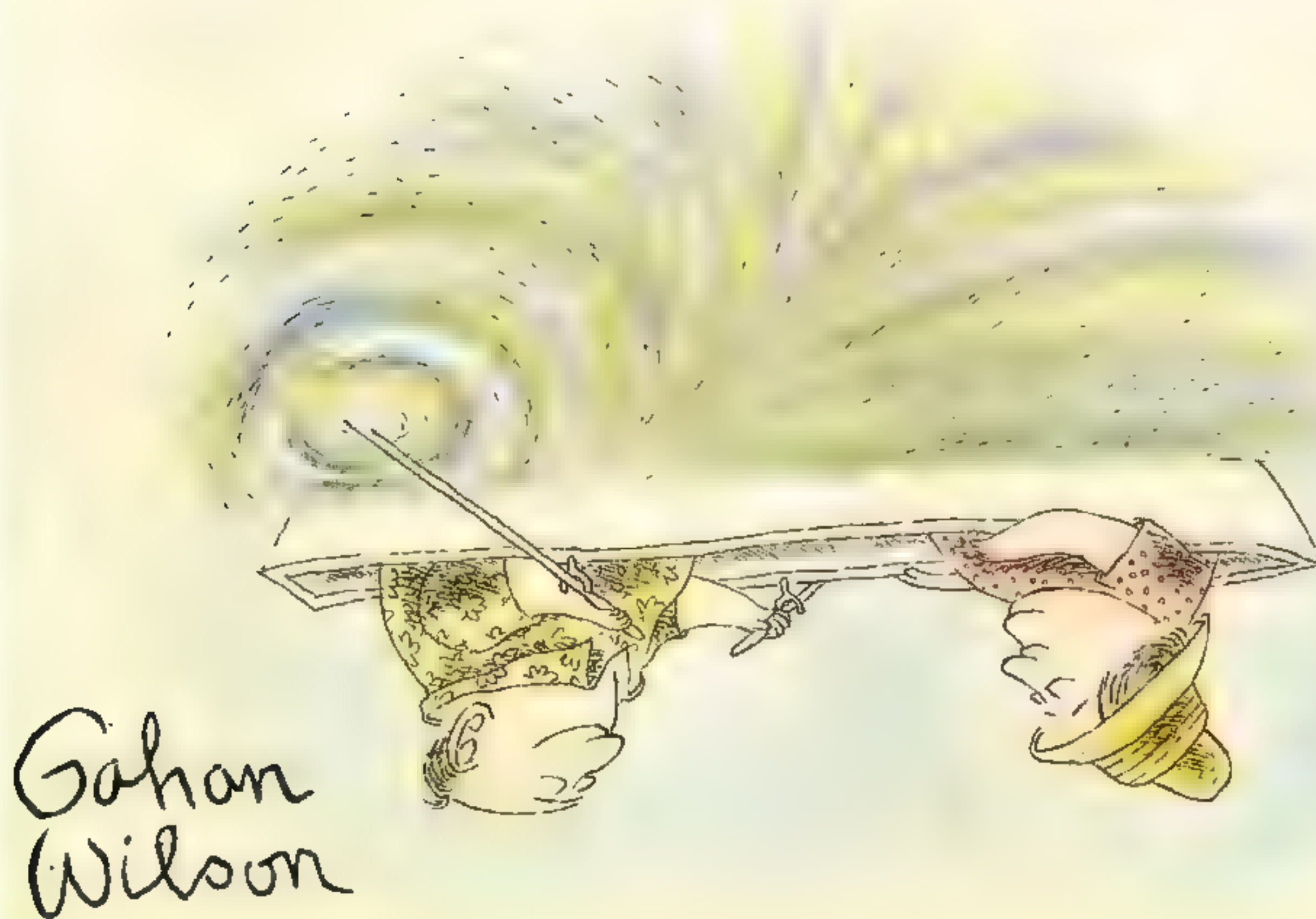
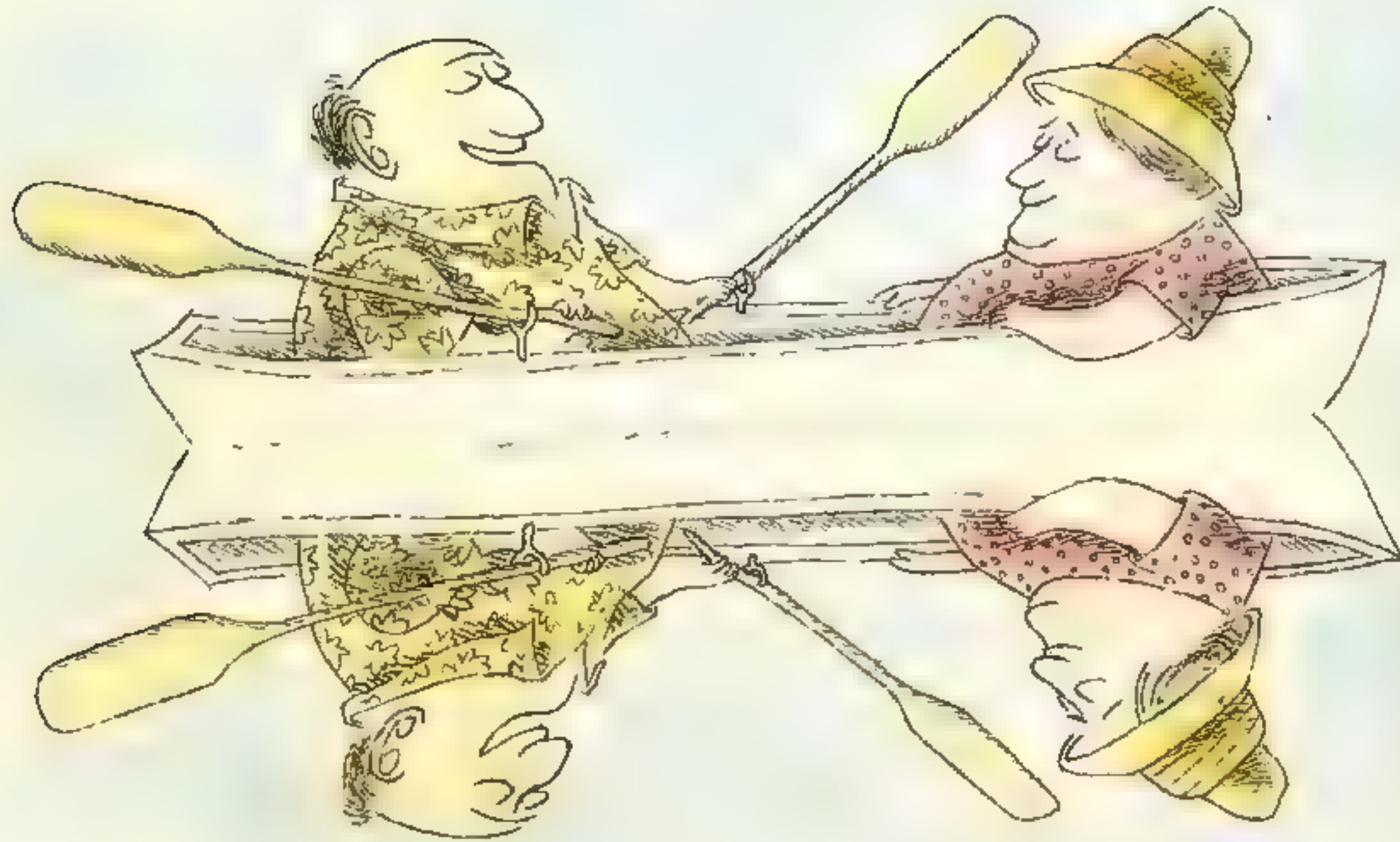
"Kill!"



"...And supposing you do repress it, Leonardo? Somebody else is certain to come across it again in a few years."



"Accursed Daylight Saving Time!"



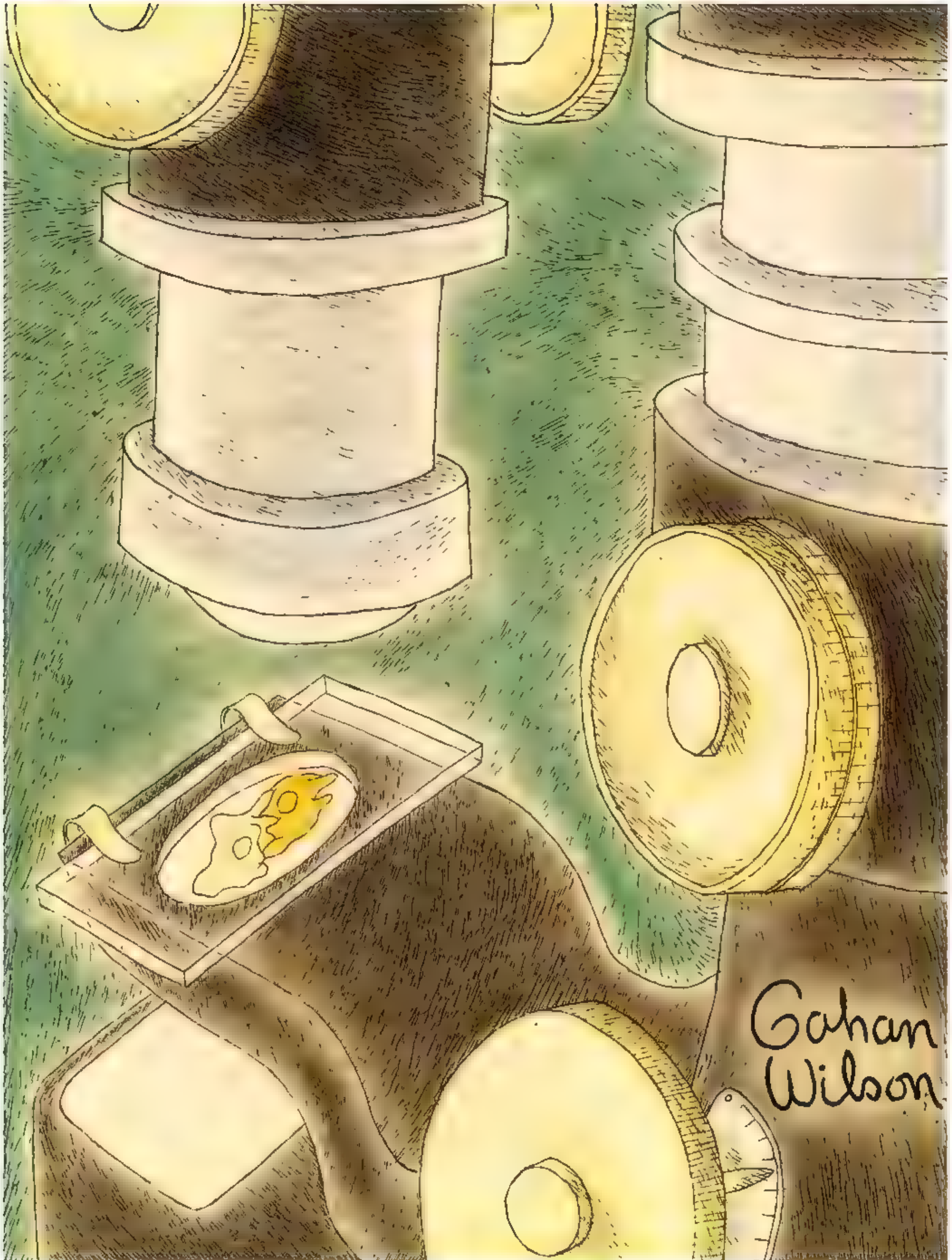
"Wouldn't it be funny if they turned out to be the real us?"



"See, dear, it's only an owl hooting...."



“...But, seriously....”



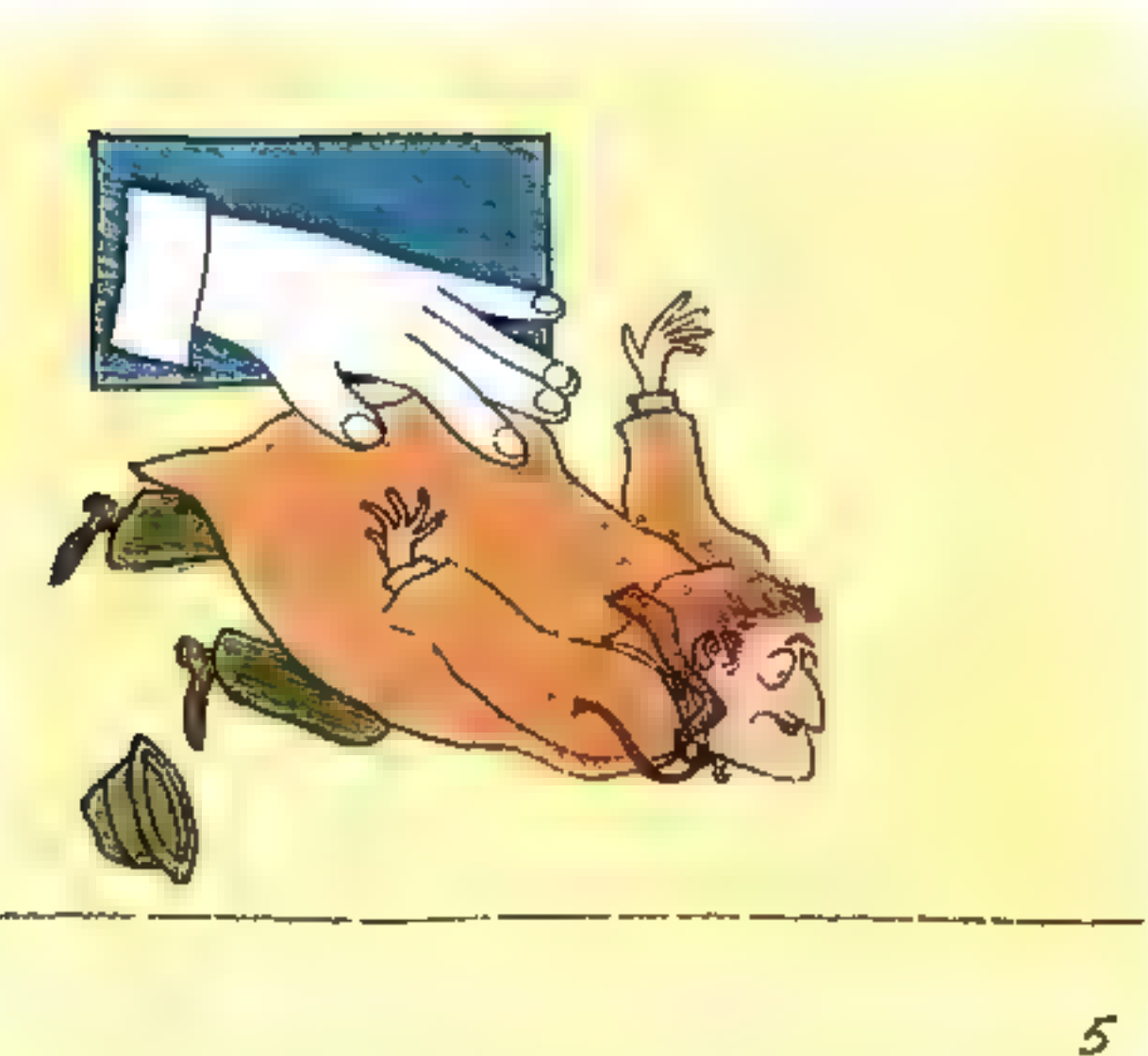
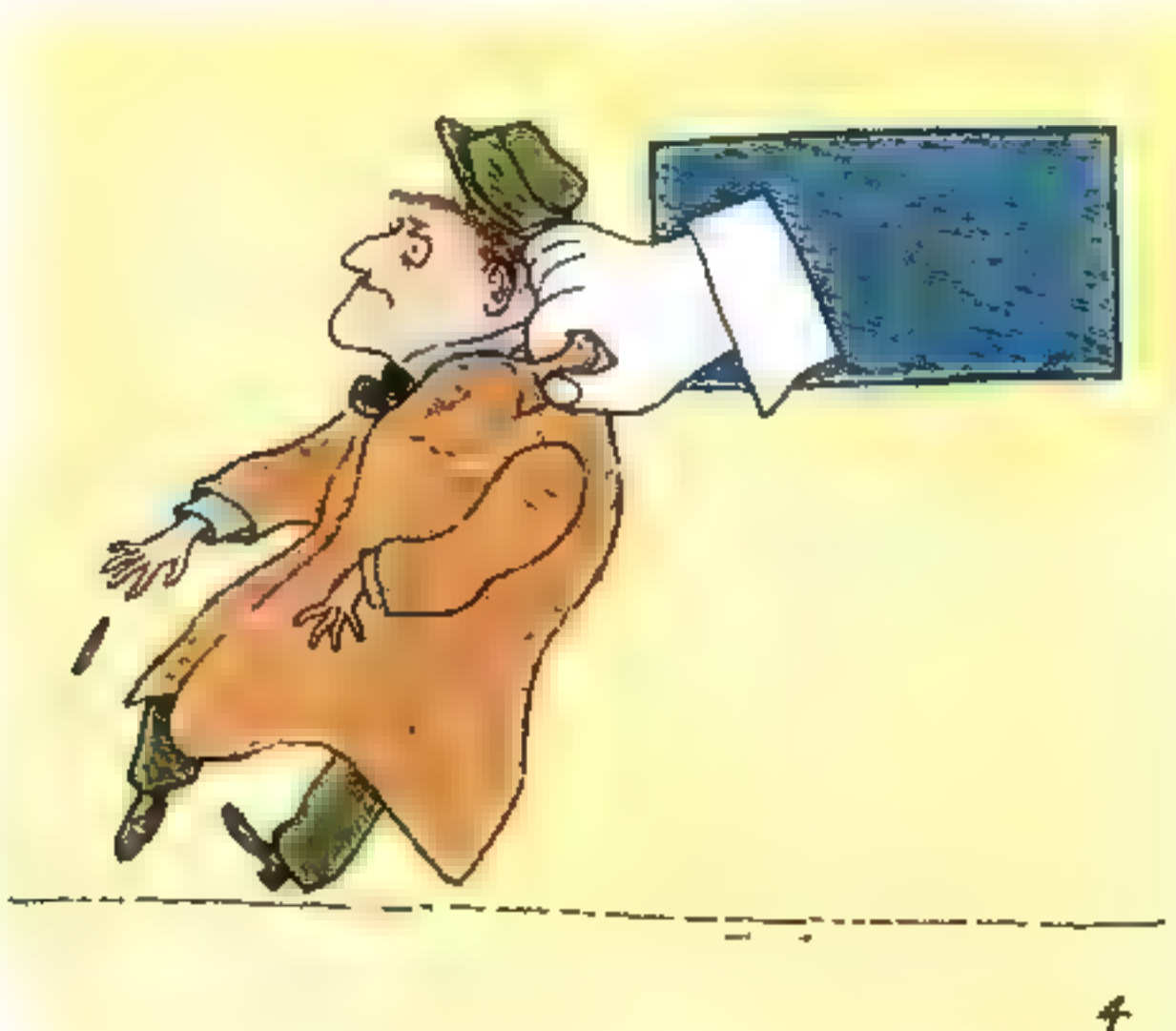
Gahan
Wilson

"Please, George...not here!"



"So where were you during the tourist season?"

One Way Only.





Graham
Wilson

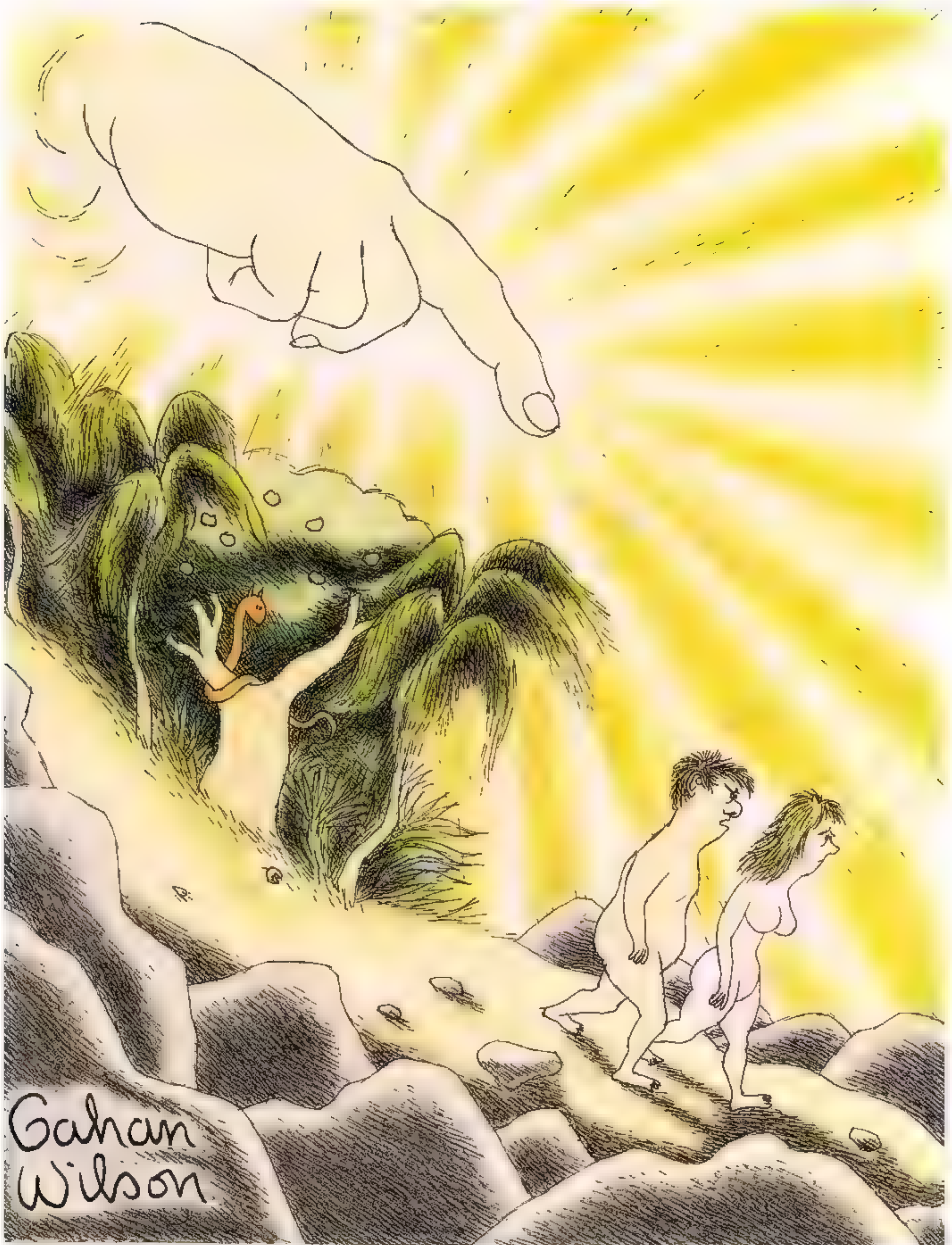
"On the other hand, people always remember my name...."



*"Damn it—I told them I was too well known
for undercover work!"*



"Some poor devils can't make a go of anything."



"Just who does He think He is?!!"



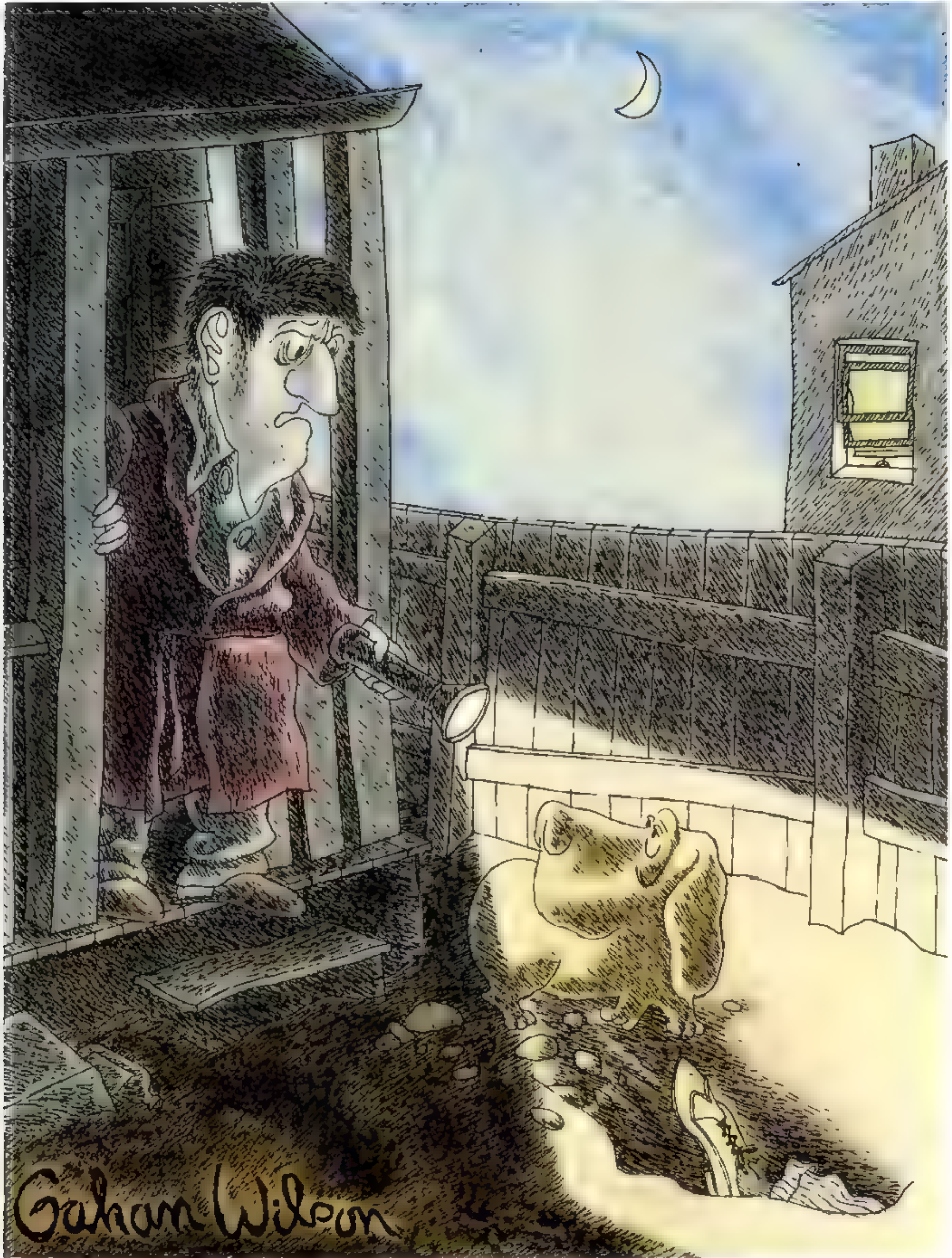
"I kept hoping the picture would get old and repulsive looking, instead of me, but it didn't work out that way."



"Surprised?"



"Gee, I'm awfully sorry!"

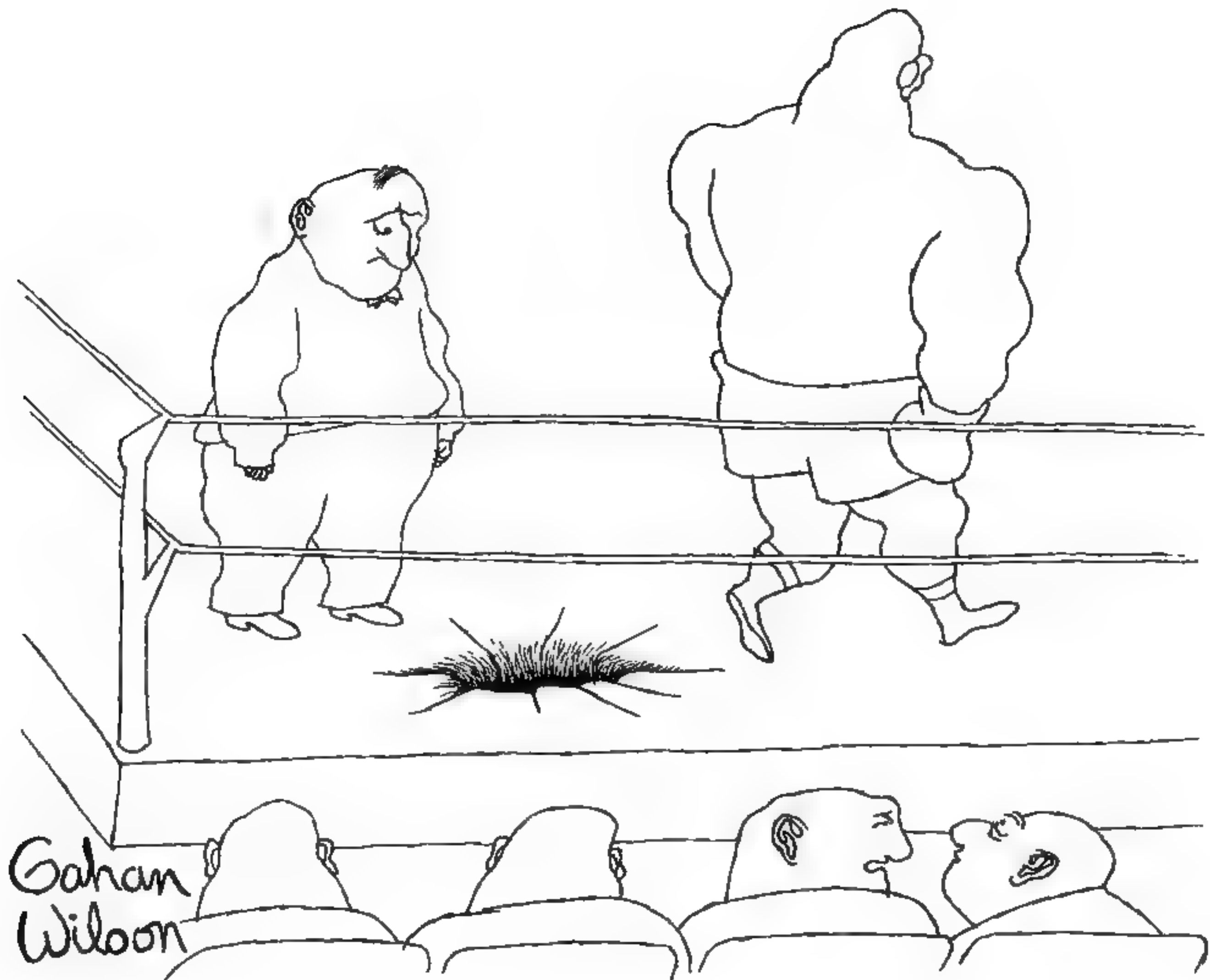


"I've told you not to do that!"

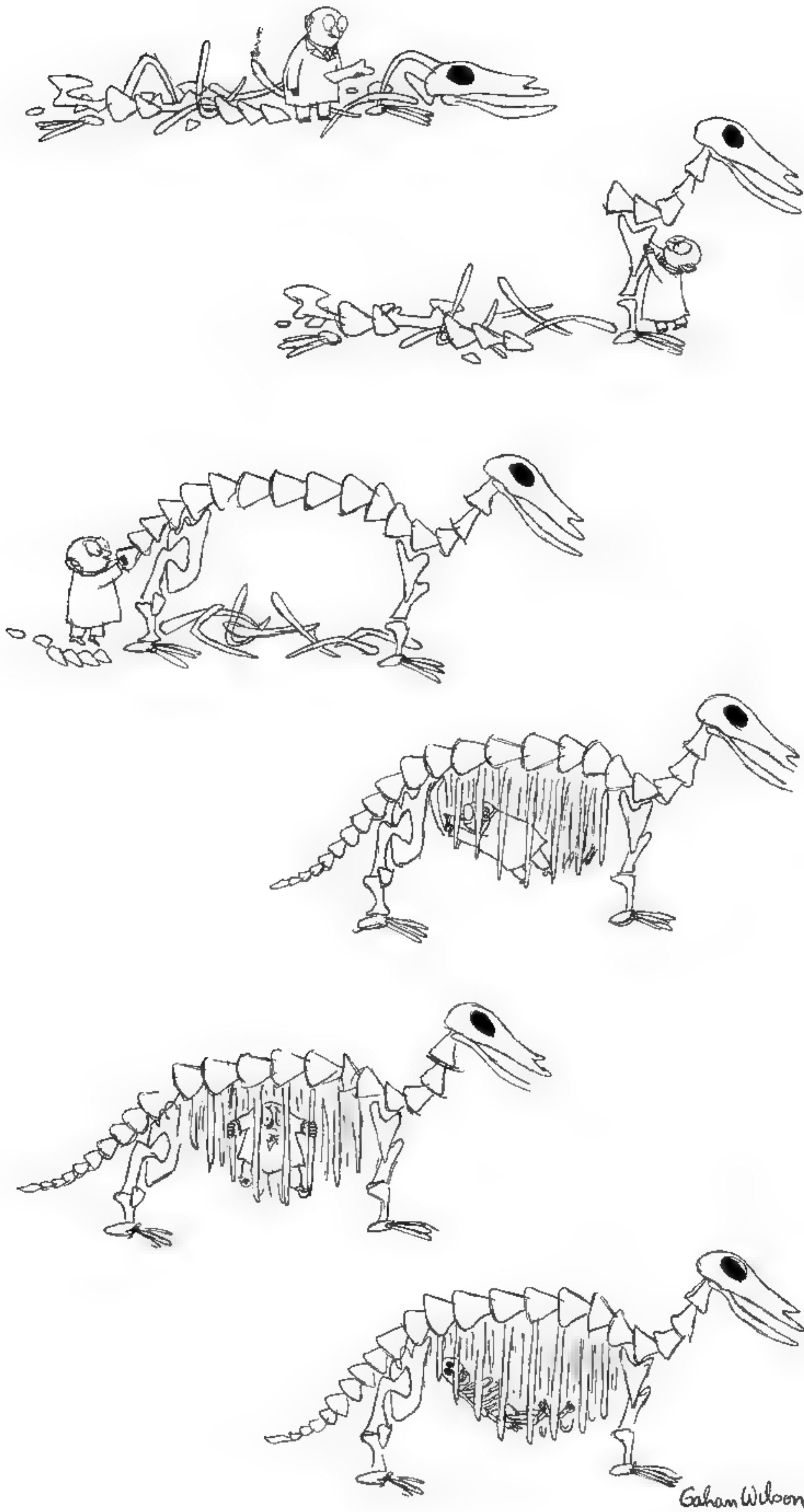




"Thank heaven there are just so many full moons in a year!"



"Well, I guess that settles that."



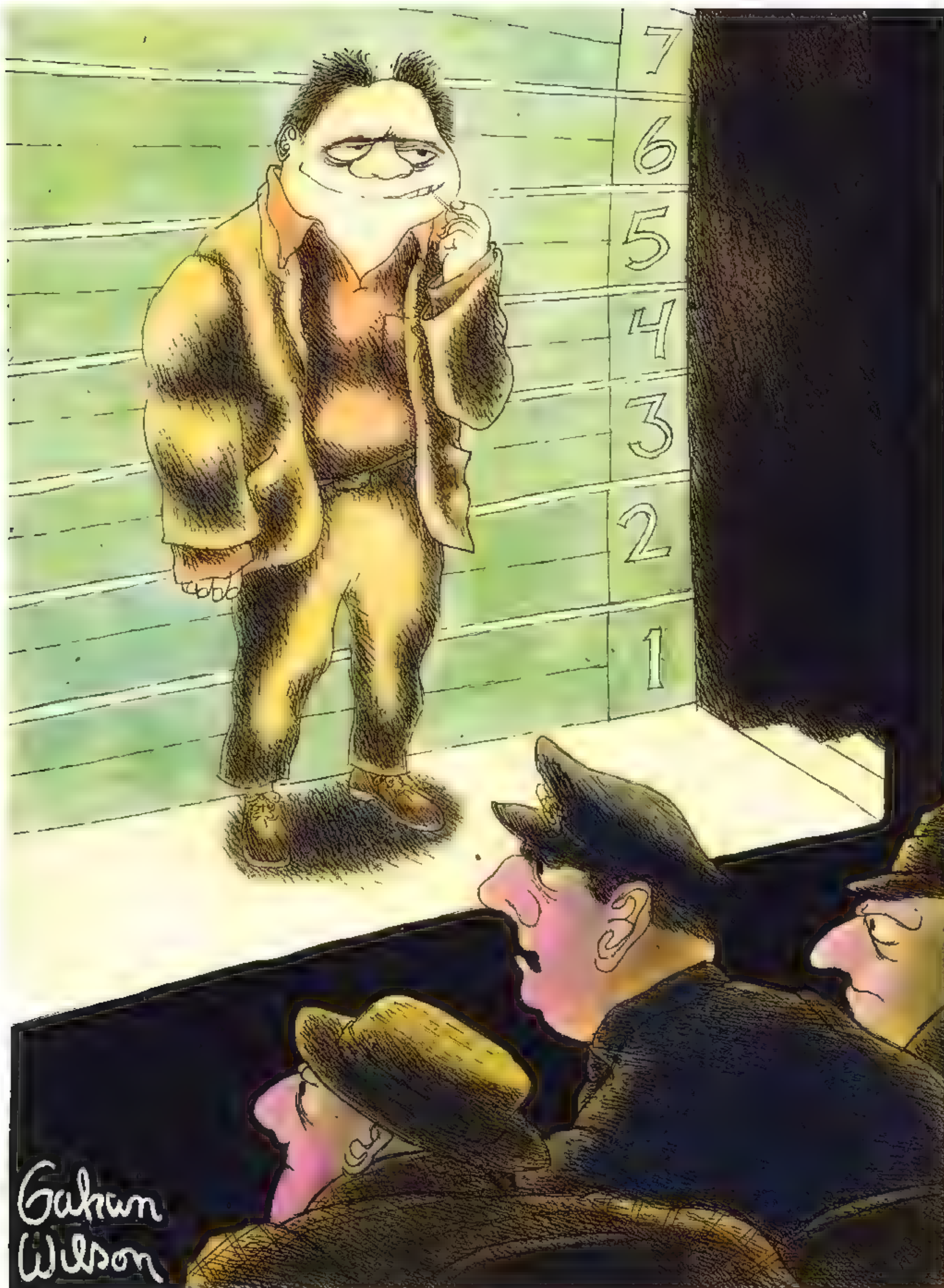
Gahan
Wilson



"Harvey! You come down here this instant!!"



"Gives the men no end of confidence."



"Where are the others?"



Gahan
Wilson

SALE - EVERYTHING MUST GO!

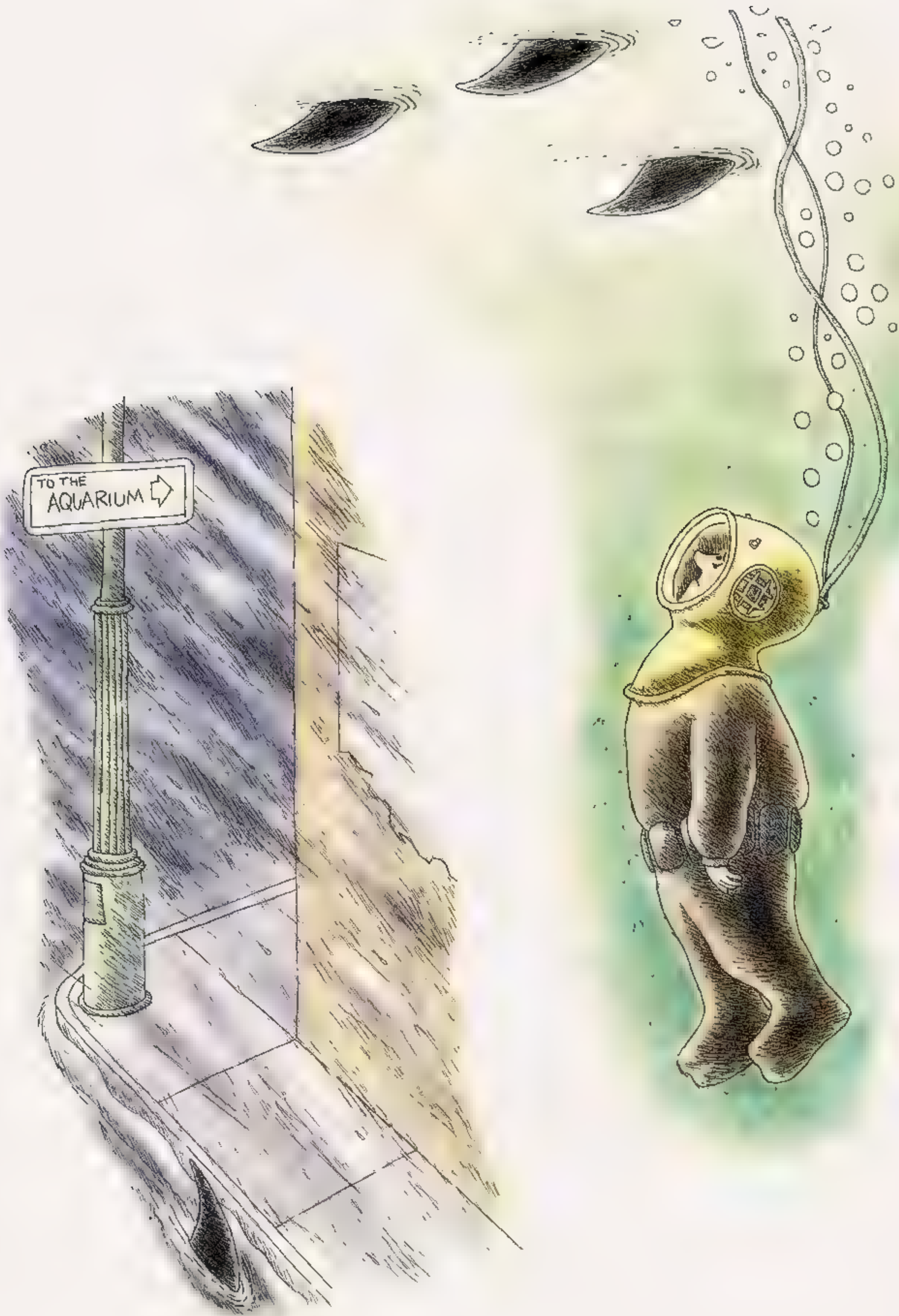


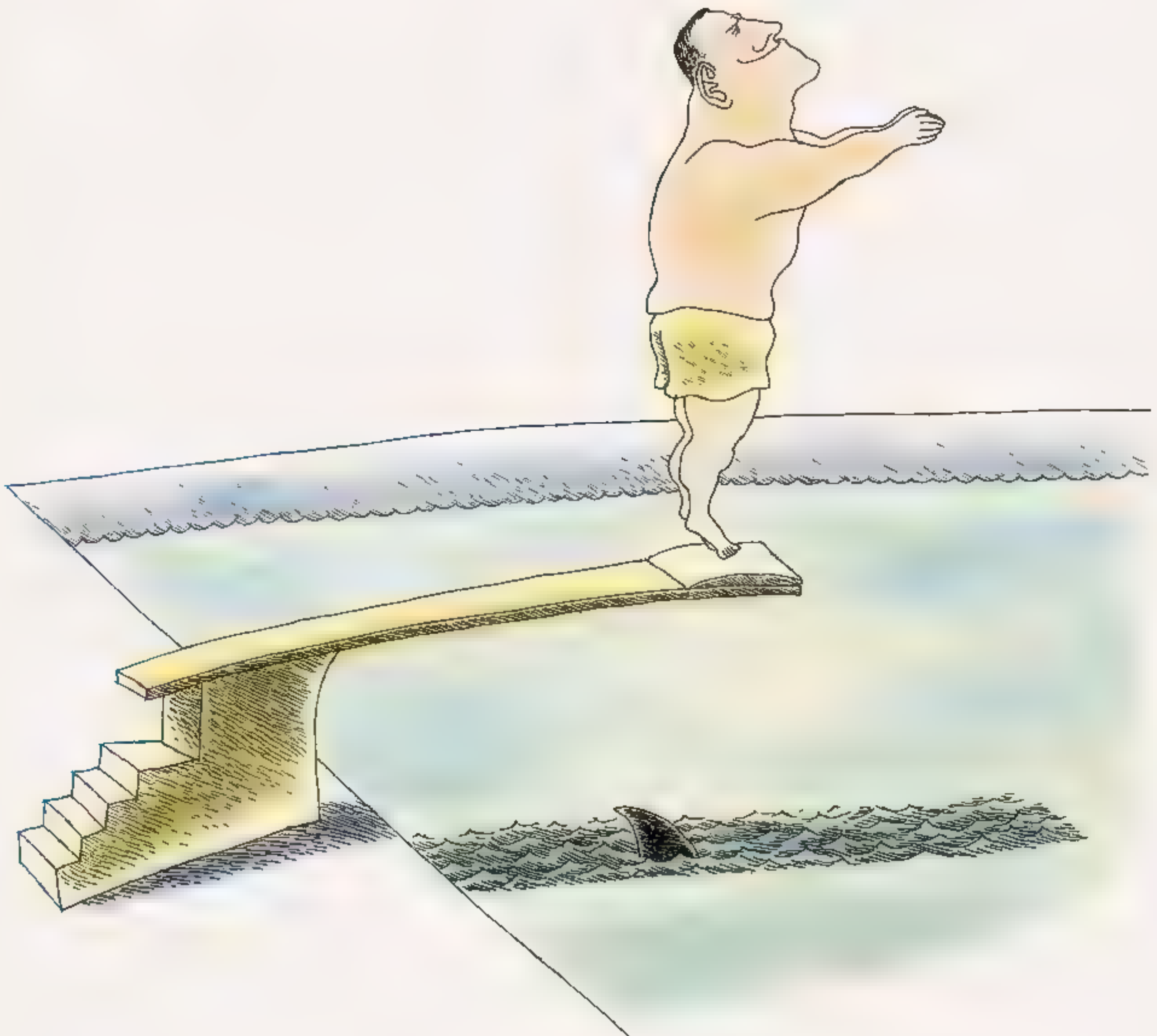
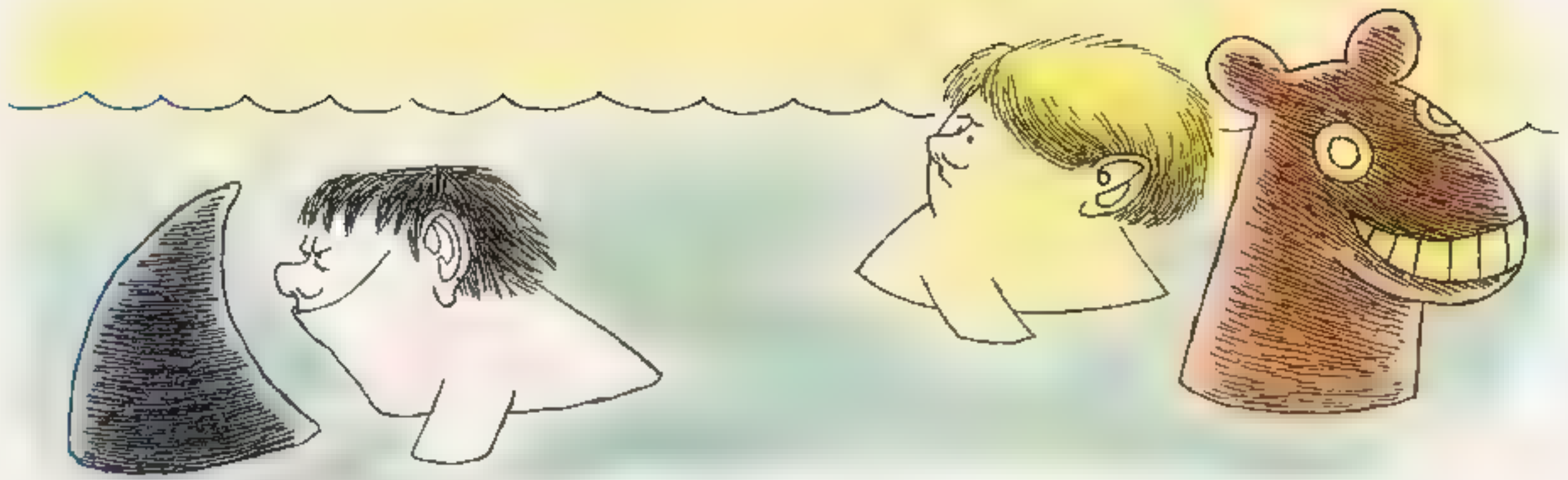
Graham Wilson

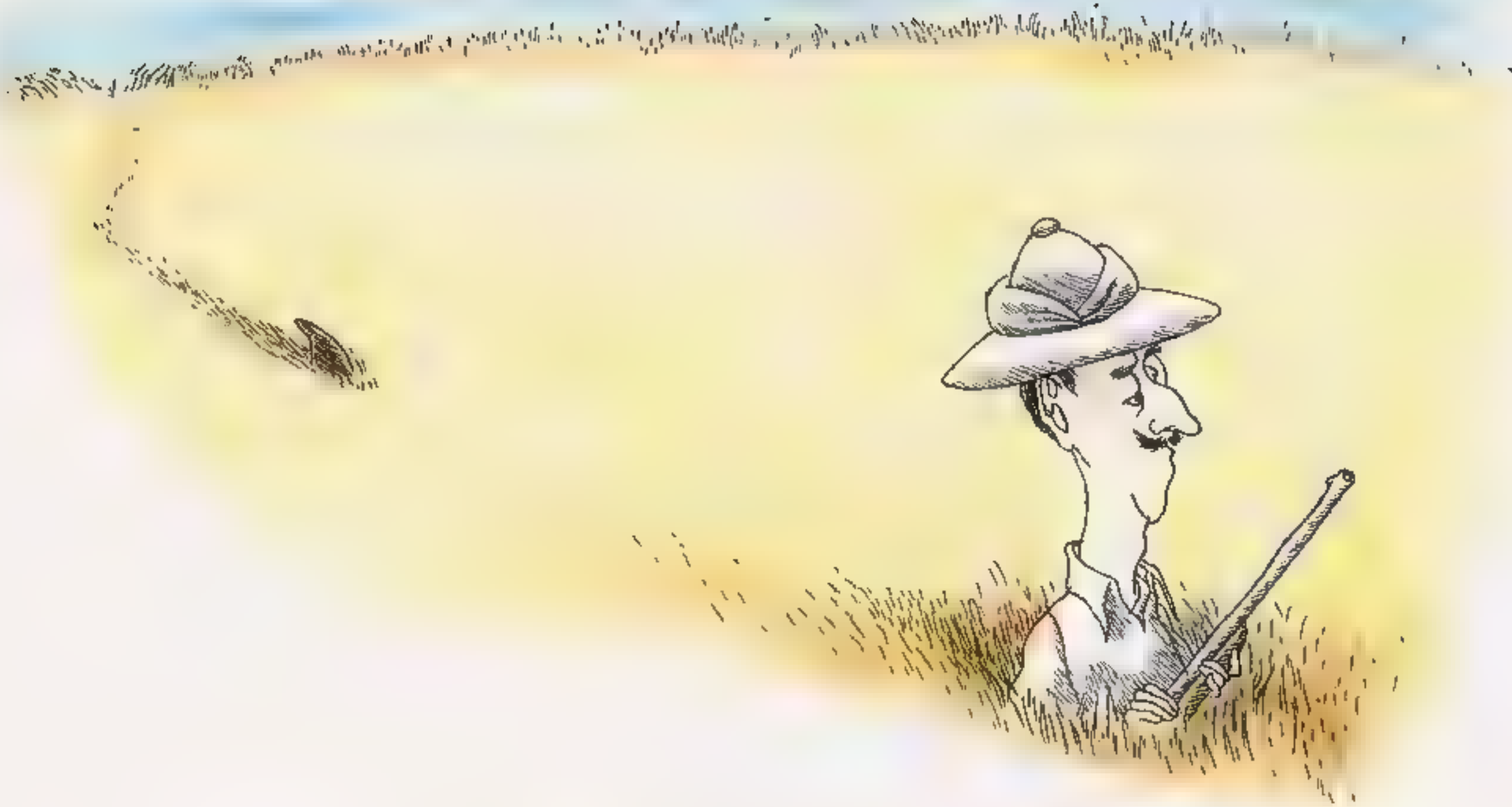


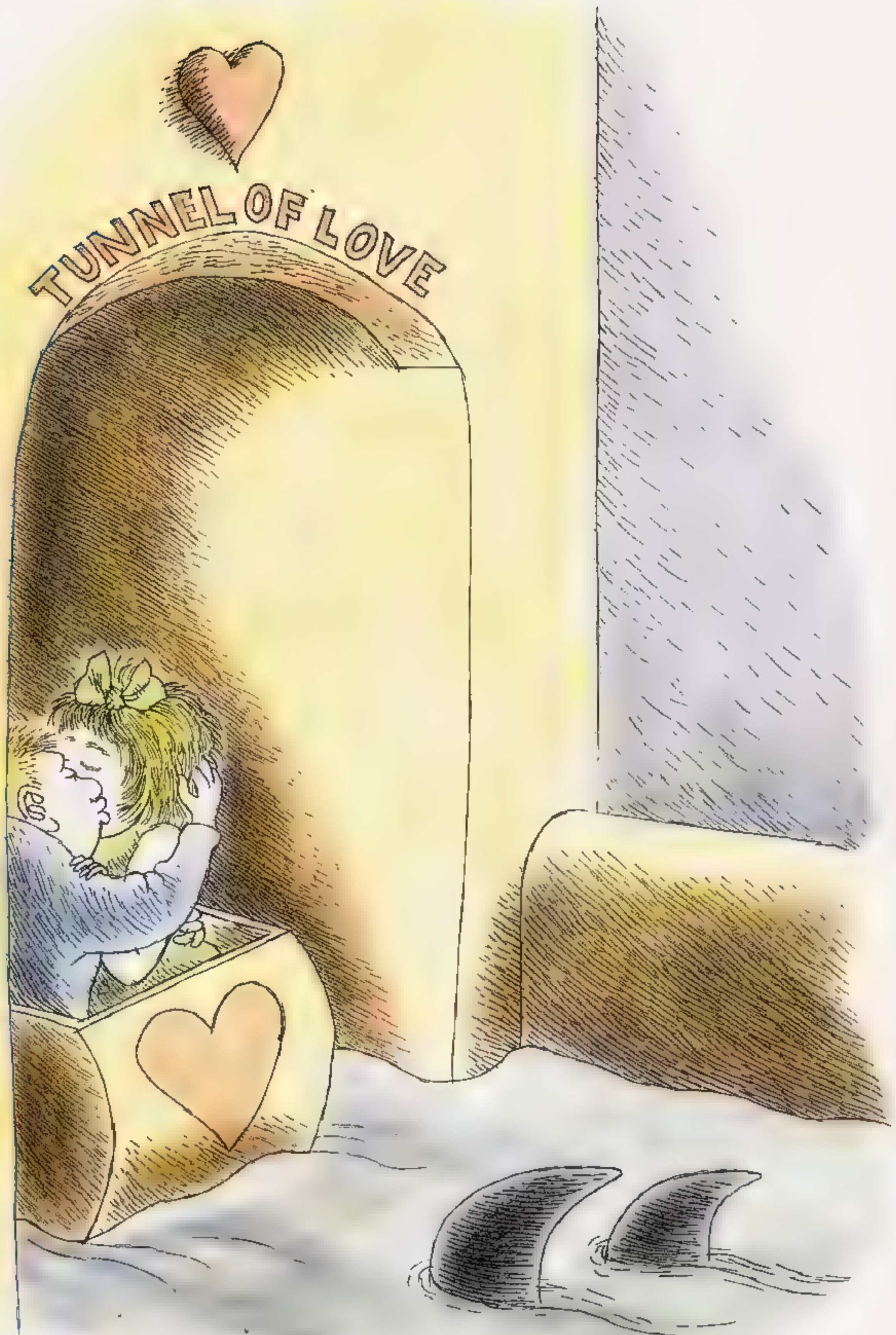
THE SHARKS: *Cartoonist Gahan Wilson Nets
a Fin-Filled School of Macabre Sea Denizens.*

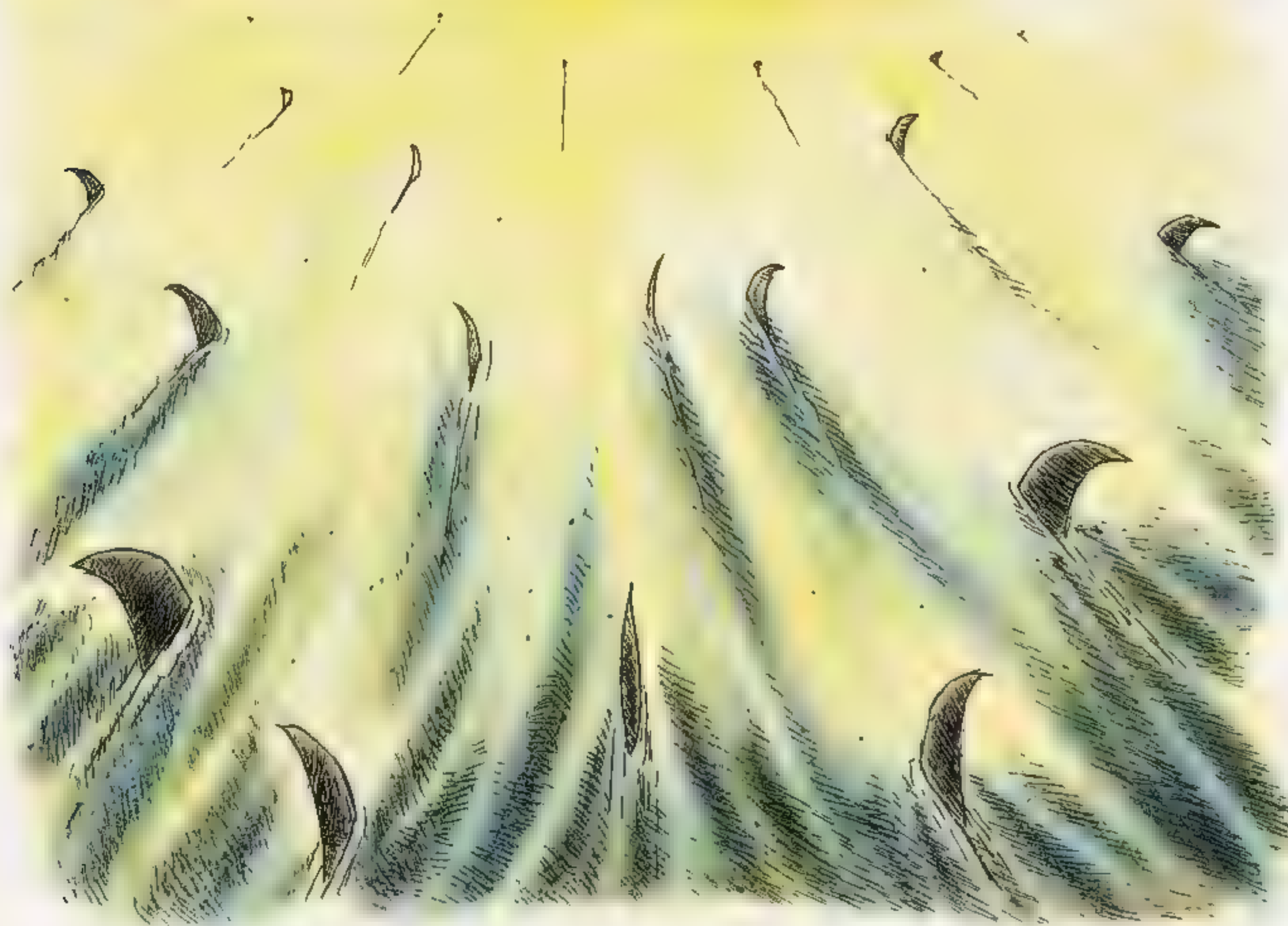
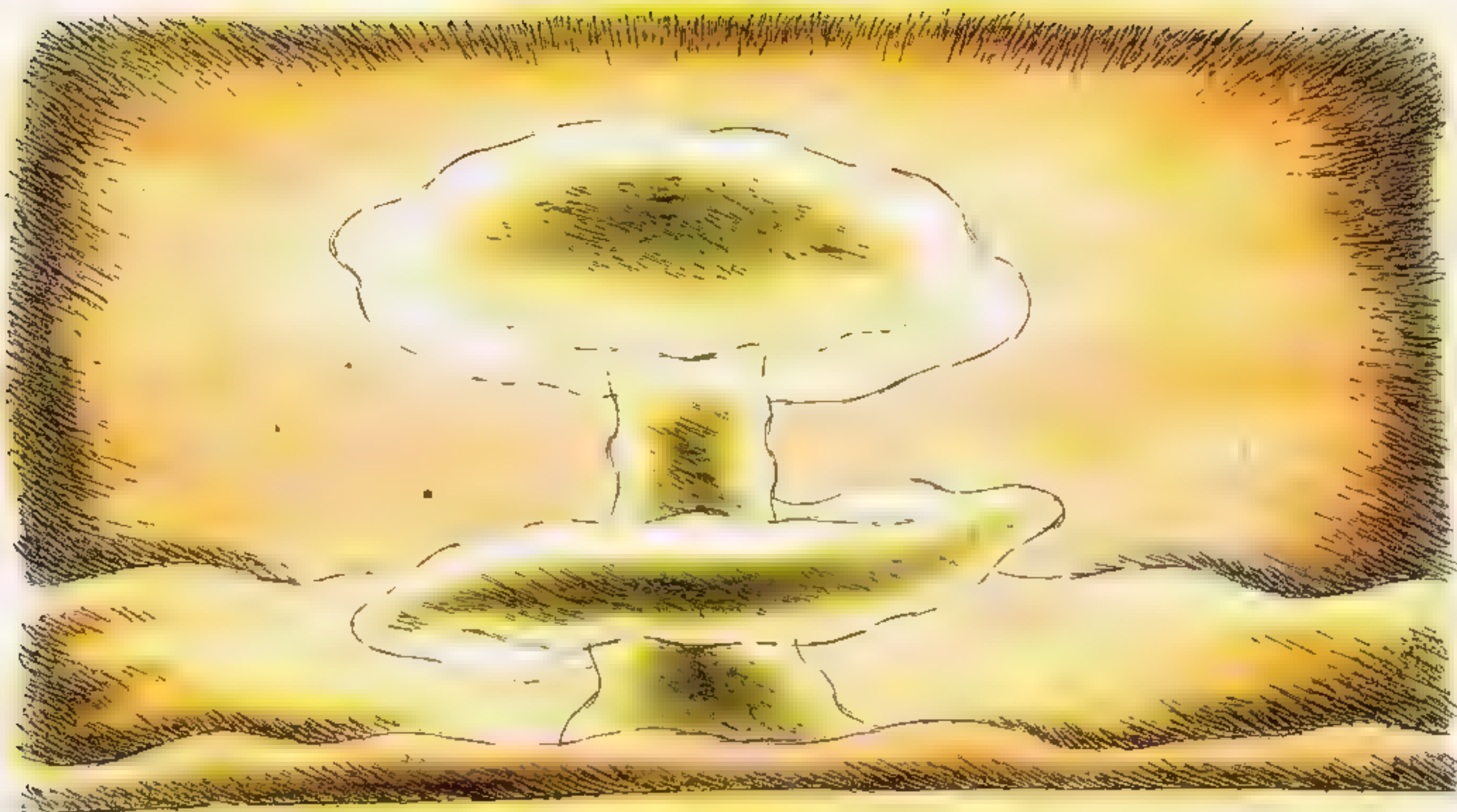


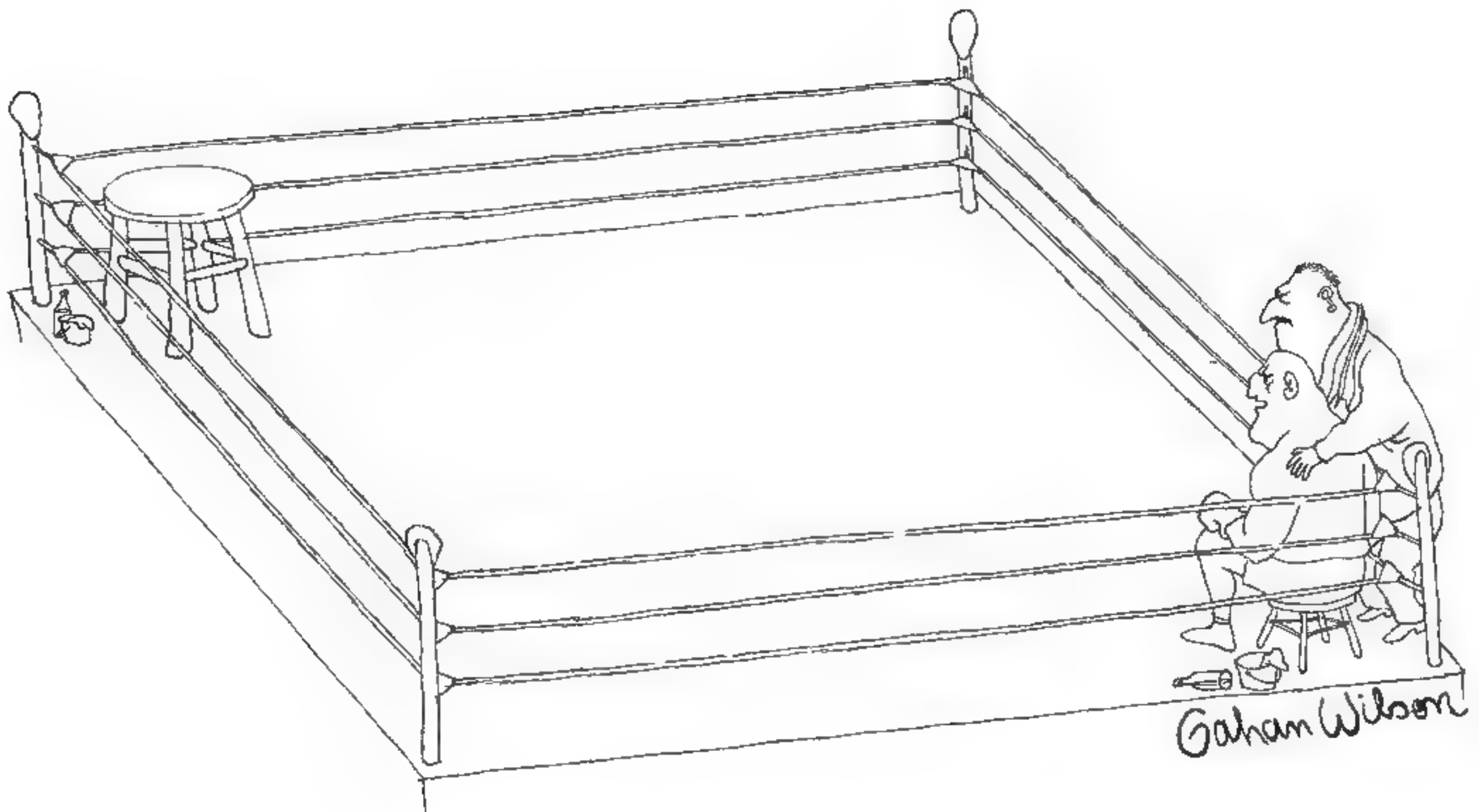




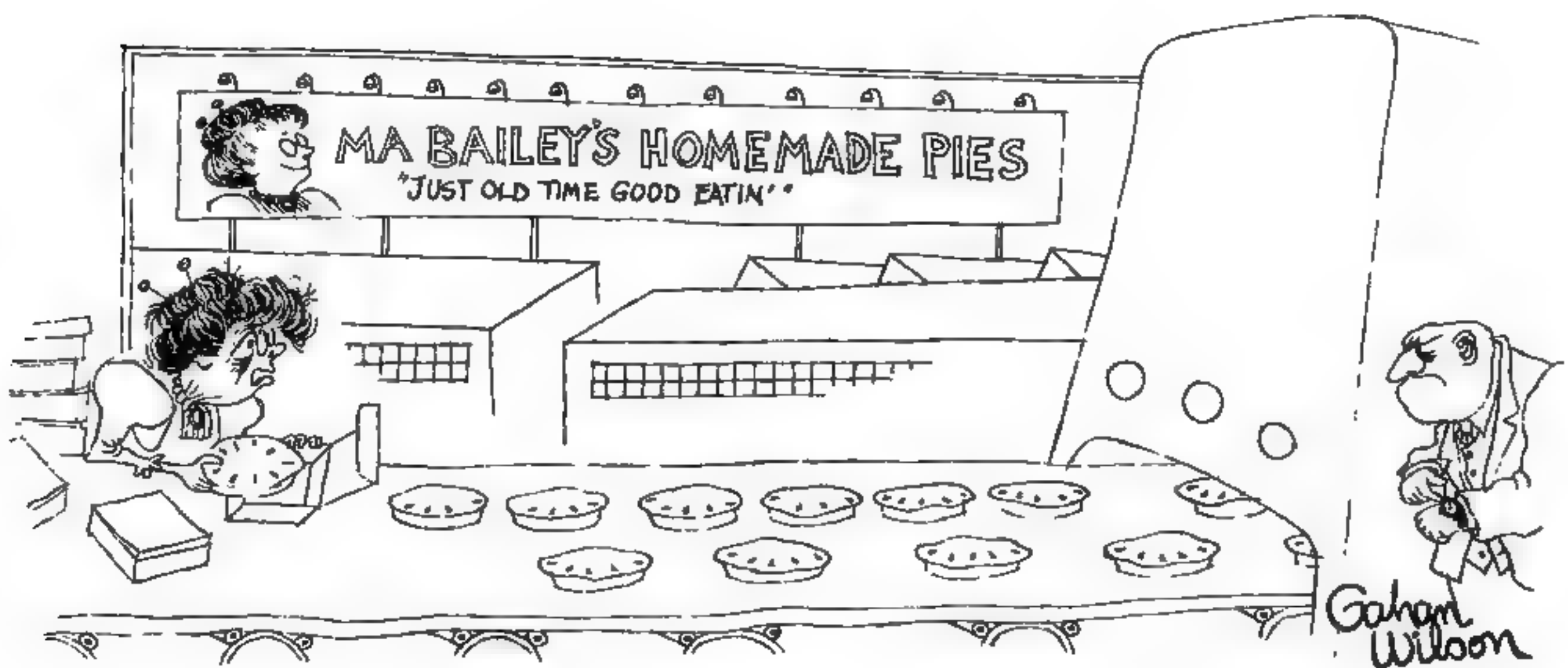




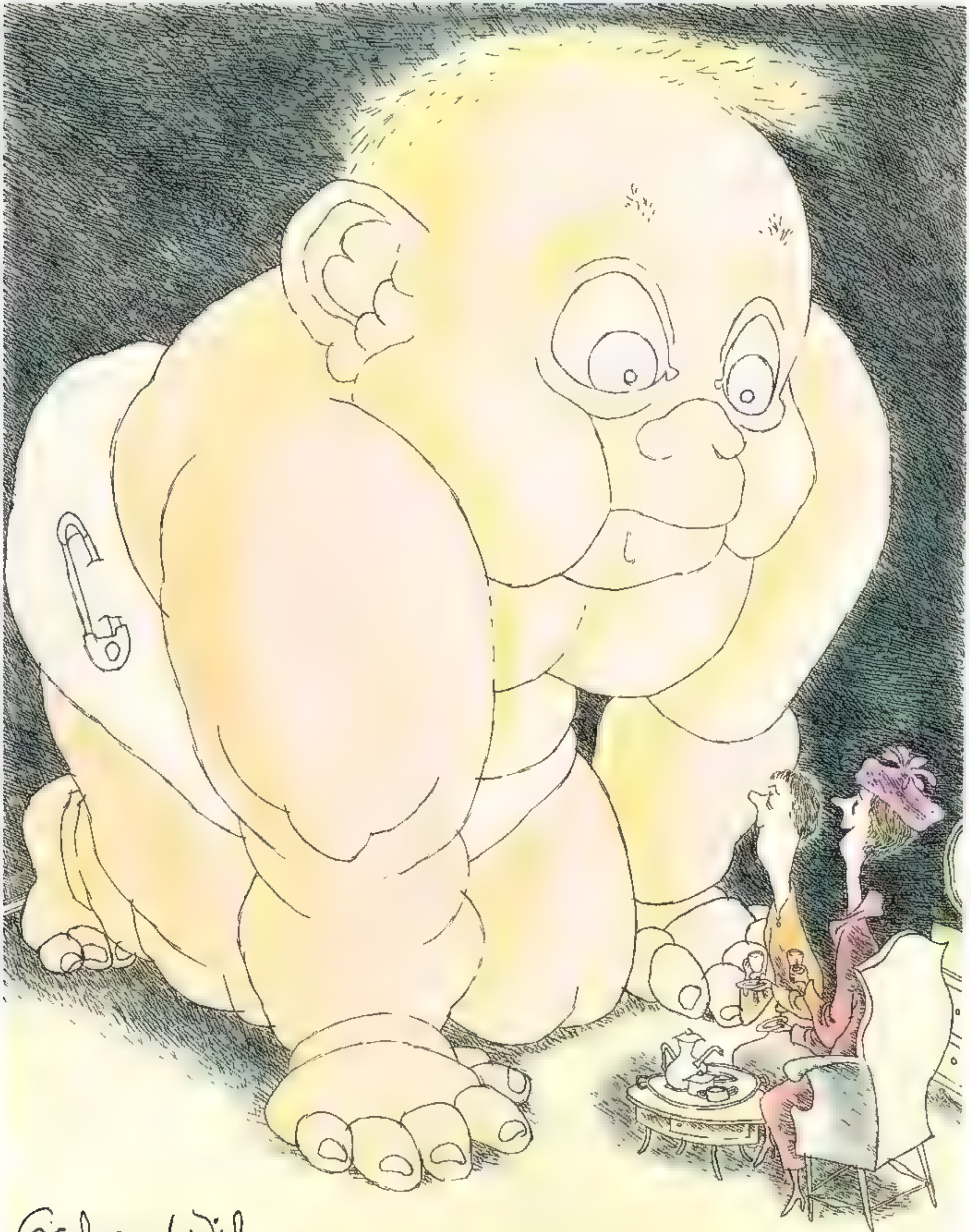




"Yeah, but suppose it's not for psychological effect?"



"Chrissake—I'm doing the best I can!"

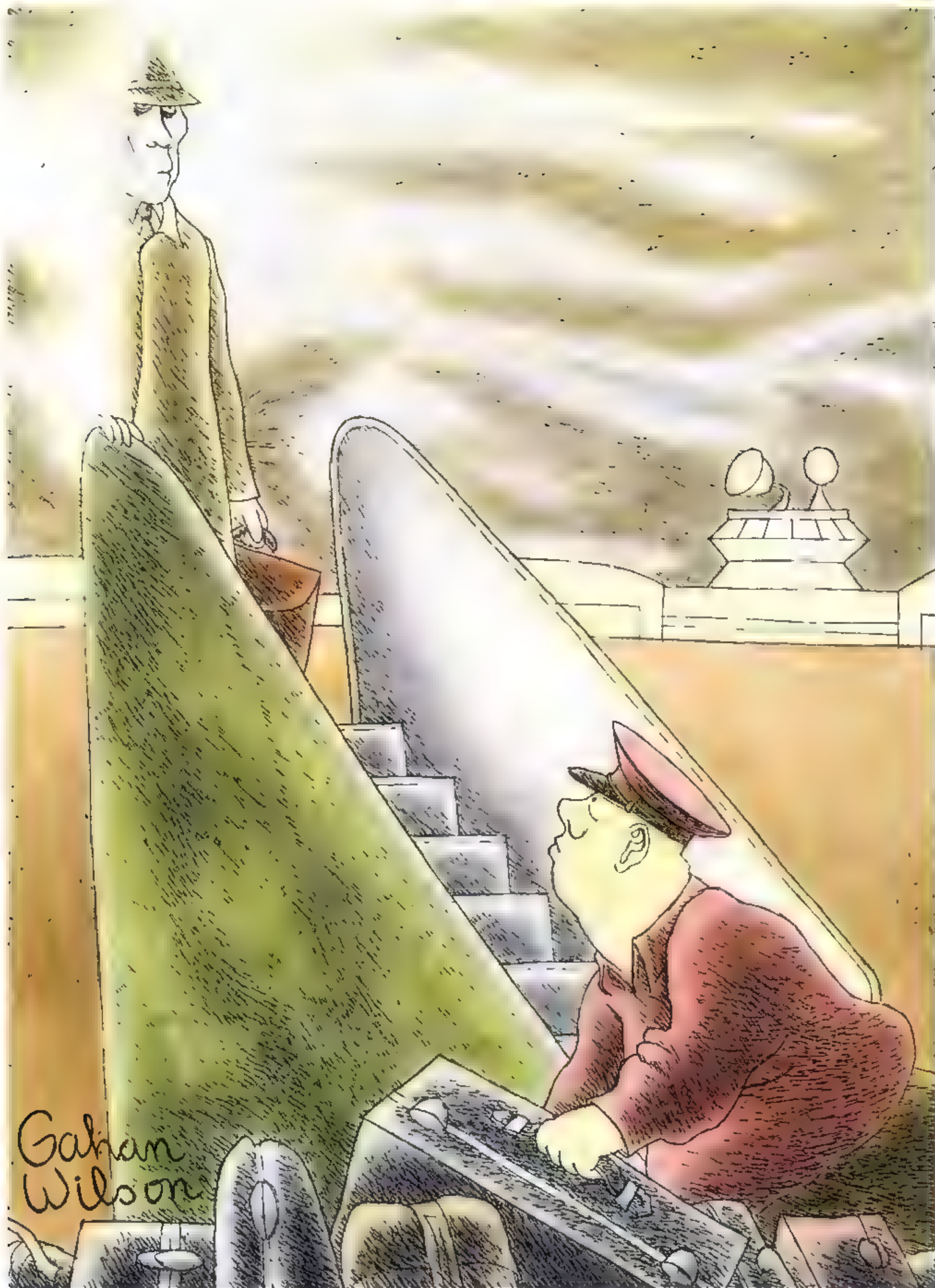


Graham Wilson

"My goodness, how he's grown!"



"Well—what's for barbecue...?"





Gahan Wilson



"Miss, that person is making a fool of you!"

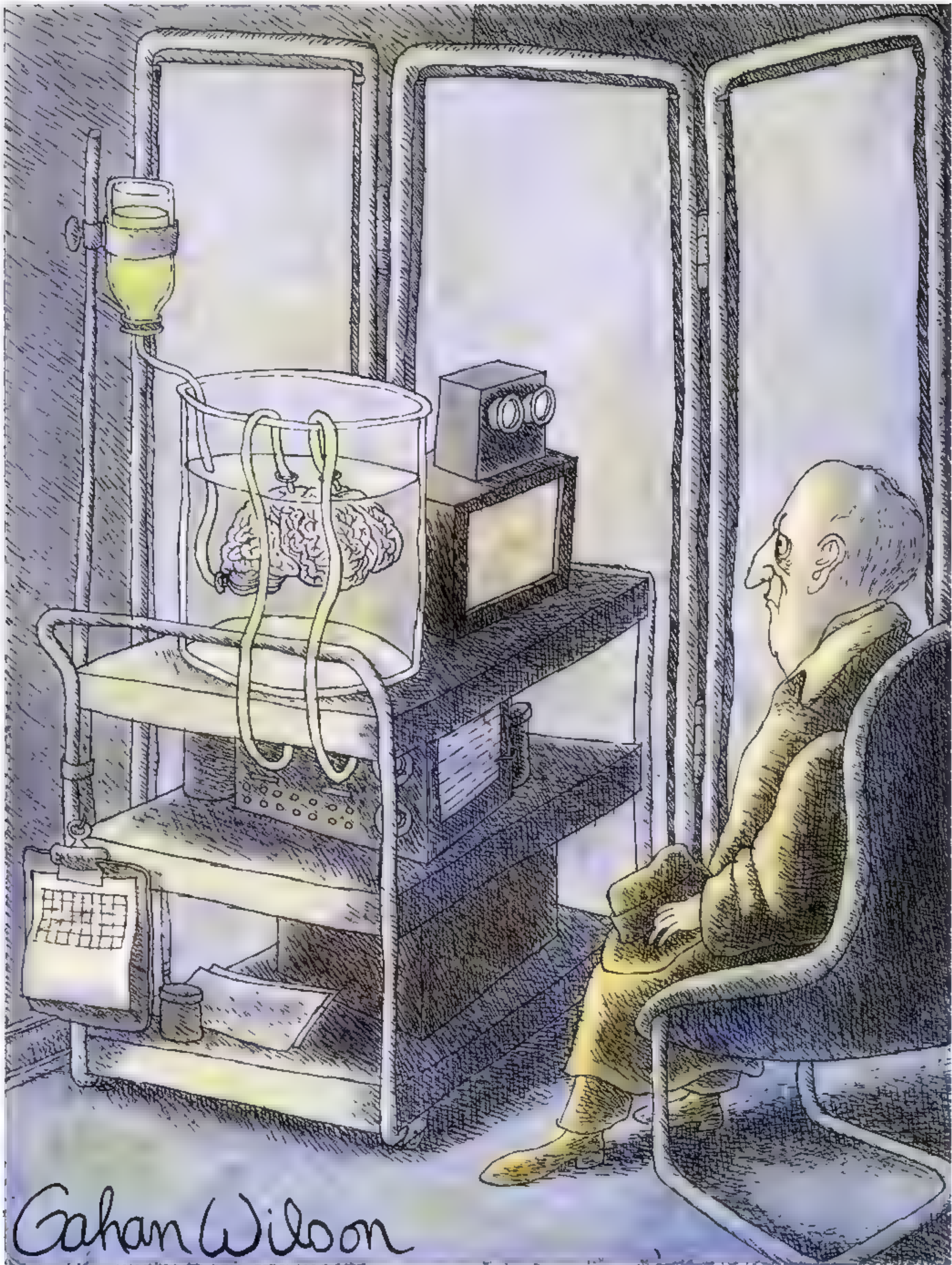


"Where to next?"



*"Well, we found out what's been clogging your chimney
since last December, Miss Emmy."*

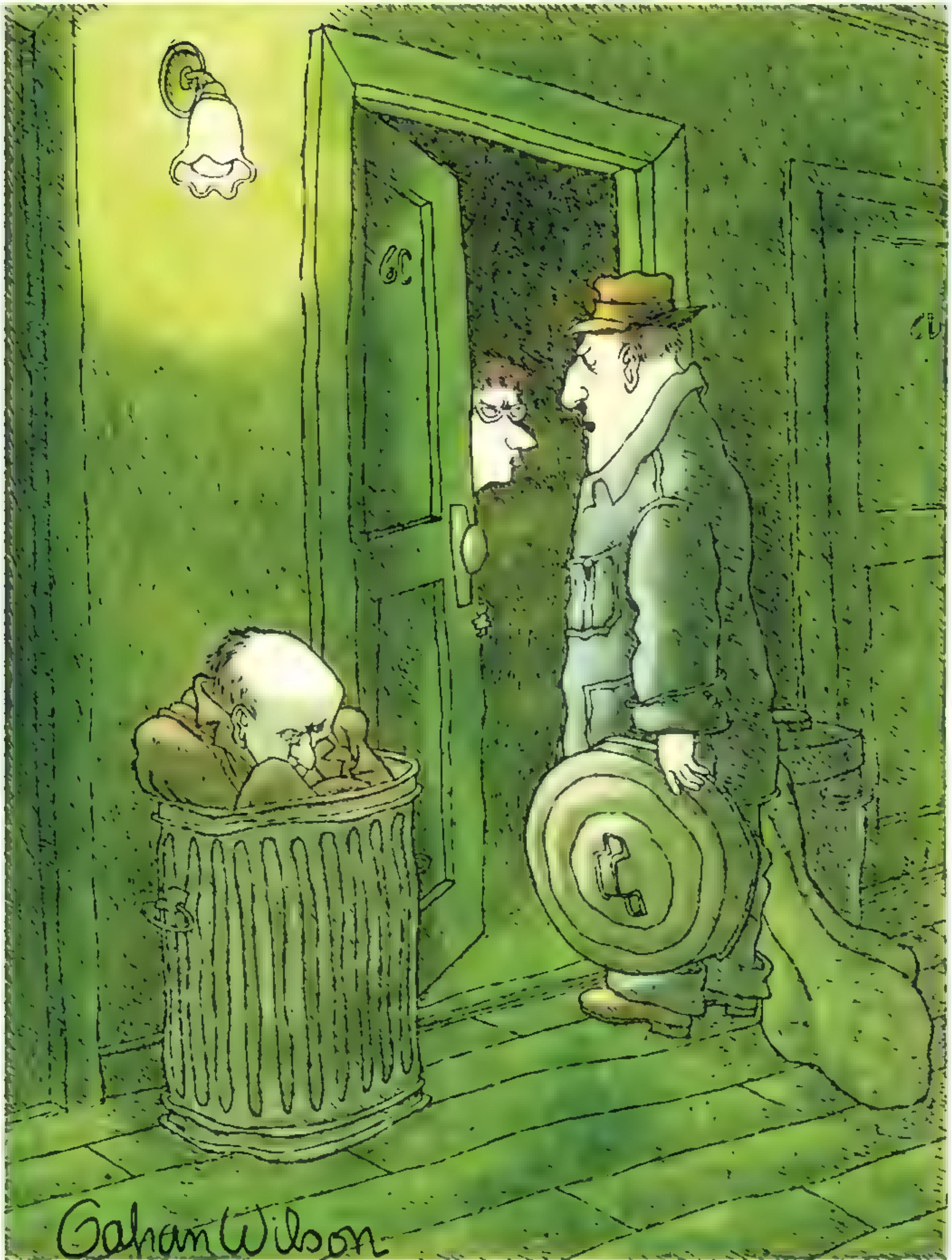




Gahan Wilson

*"The doctors...say...they've never...
seen...another case quite...like...it."*



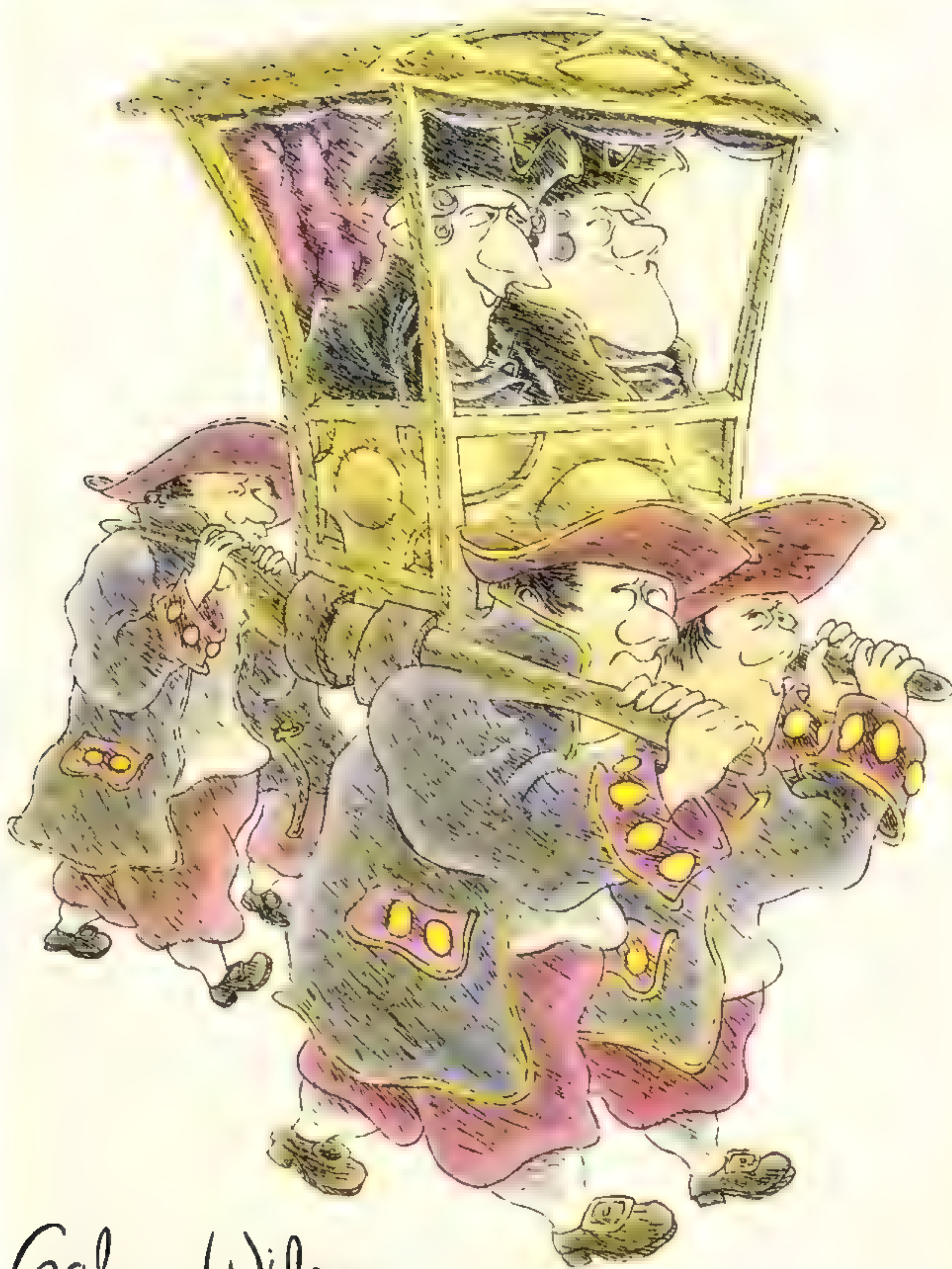


"You don't get rid of him that easy, Mrs. Jacowsky."



*"One day, when he's old and feeble, he'll be in a nostalgic mood,
and he'll come up here to see us again, and to reminisce—
and then we'll get him!"*

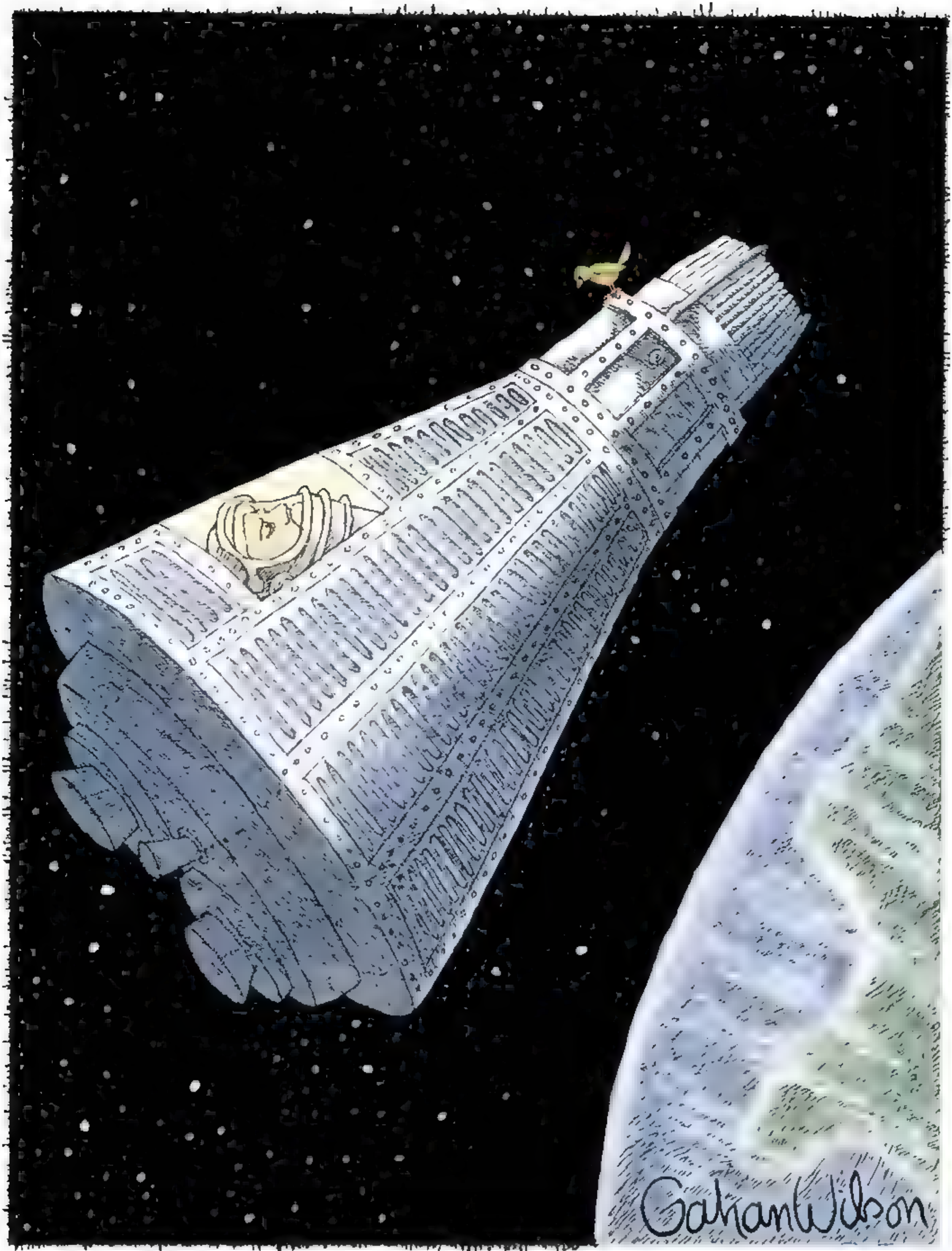
"WHERE DID WE
GO WRONG,
MOTHER? WHERE
DID WE GO
WRONG?"



Graham Wilson

"Like to see what this baby can do when I open 'er up?"





"I'm only guessing, but I think it's a red-tailed warbler..."



"My God—they're heading for the delphiniums!"



"Can't we just go after sailfish...?"

MOTHER COO: "I have just seen a very large flock of
 birds flying over the house. They are very large and very
 many."



"Is this supposed to be somebody's idea of a joke?"



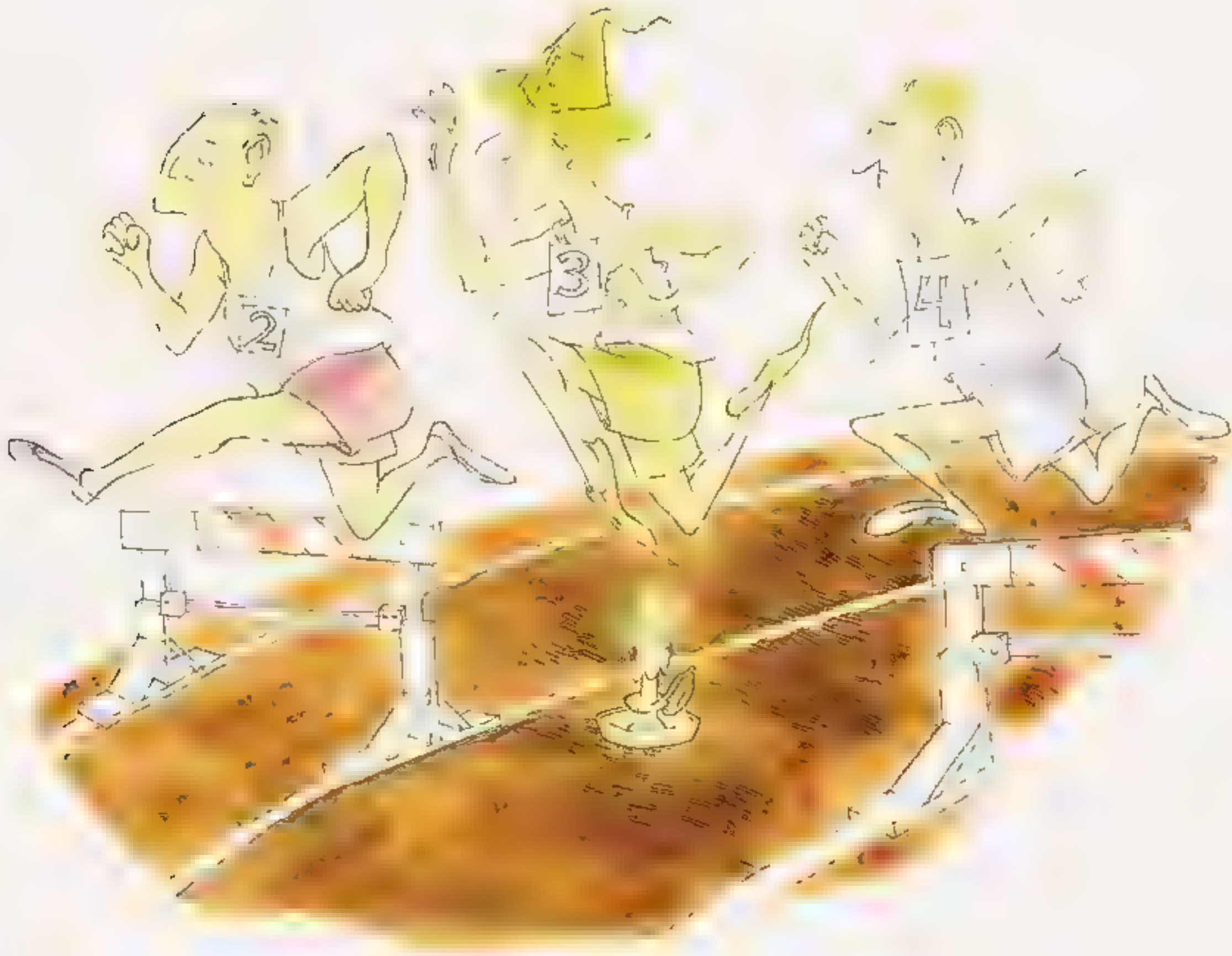
"Oh, grow up, Jack!"

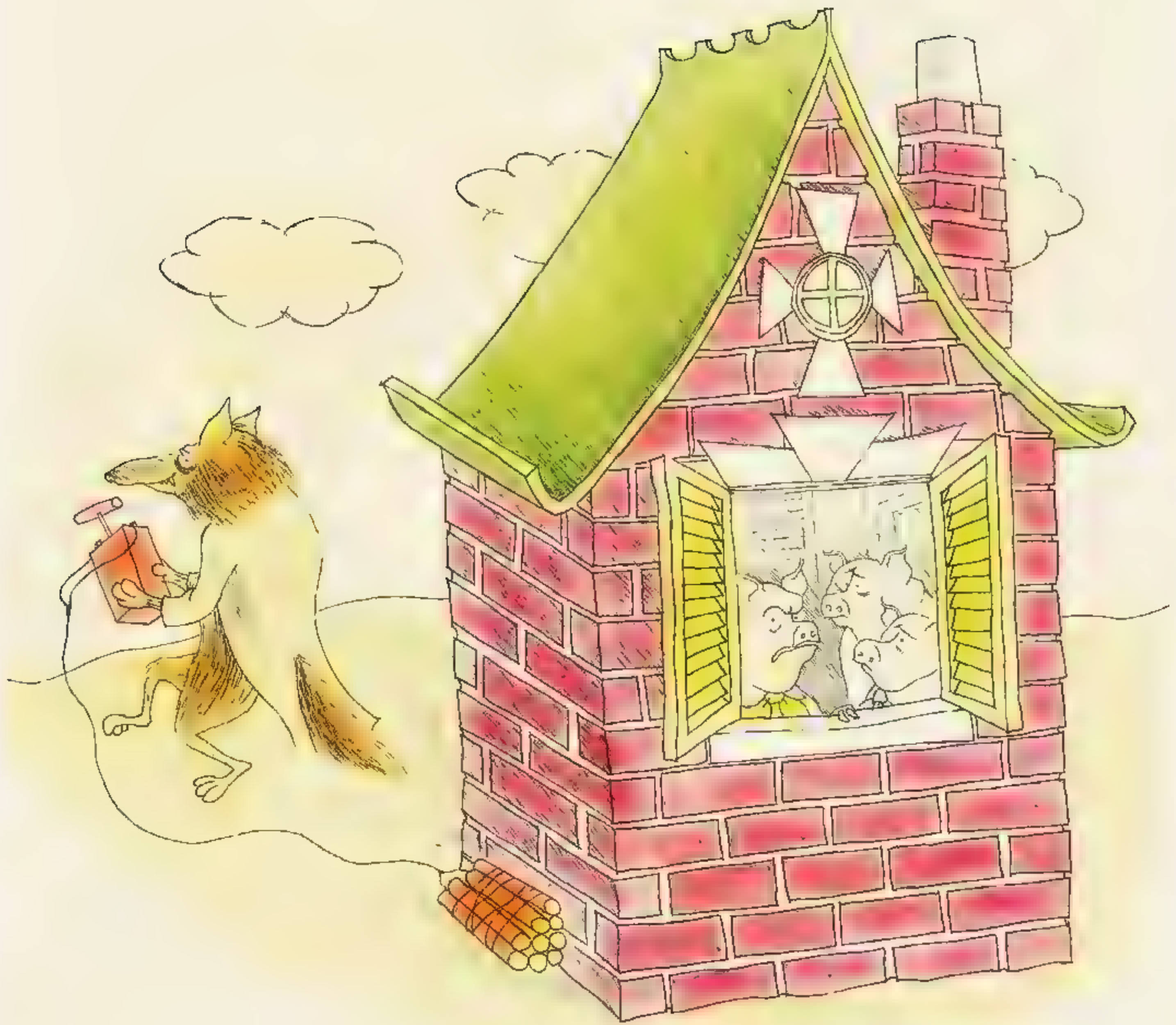


"She'll never buy it!"



"I know it seems cruel, but it did save their marriage!"





"I don't like this—he's left off huffing and puffing!"



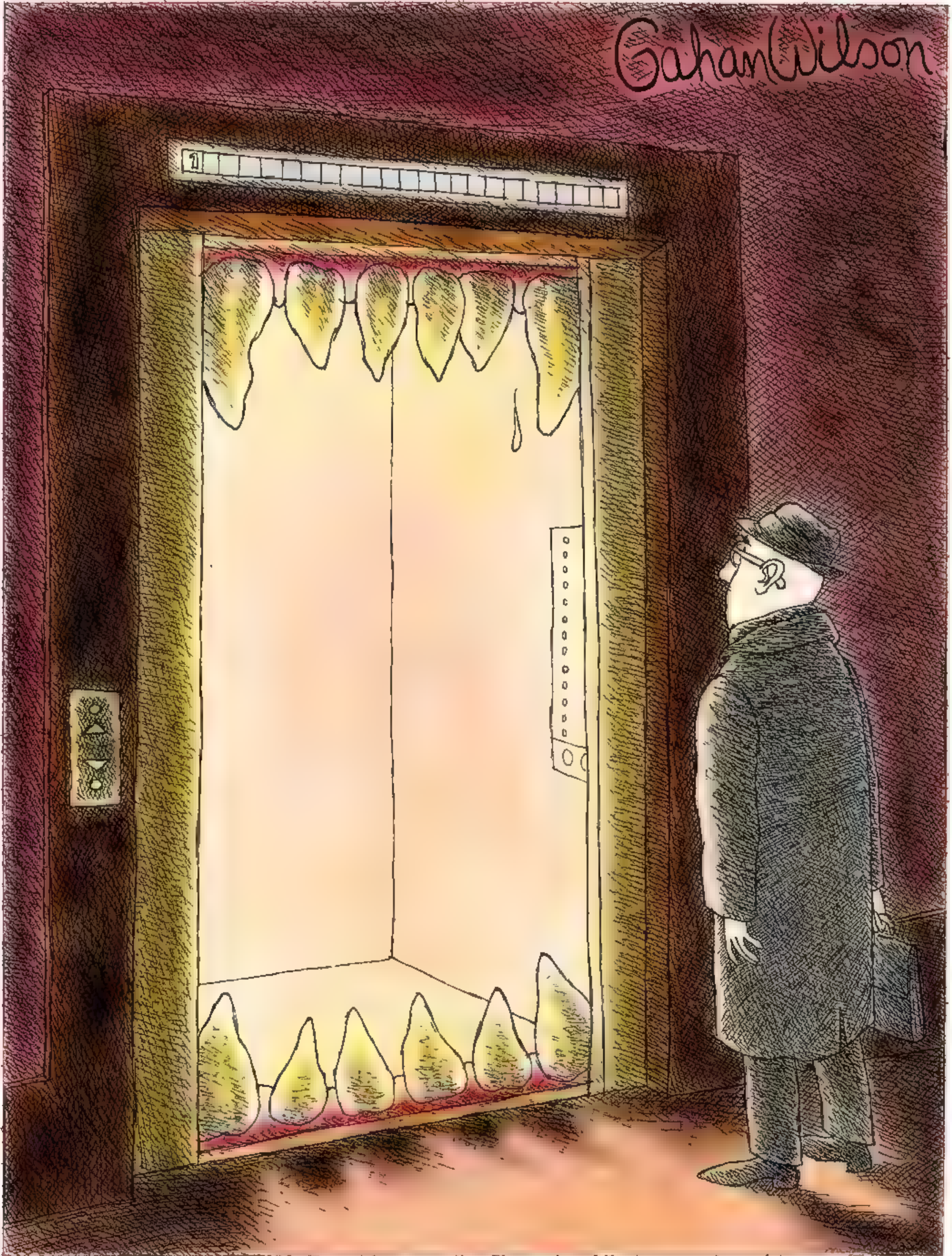


"For God's sake—call a policeman!"



"All right – what's the trouble this time?"

Gahan Wilson

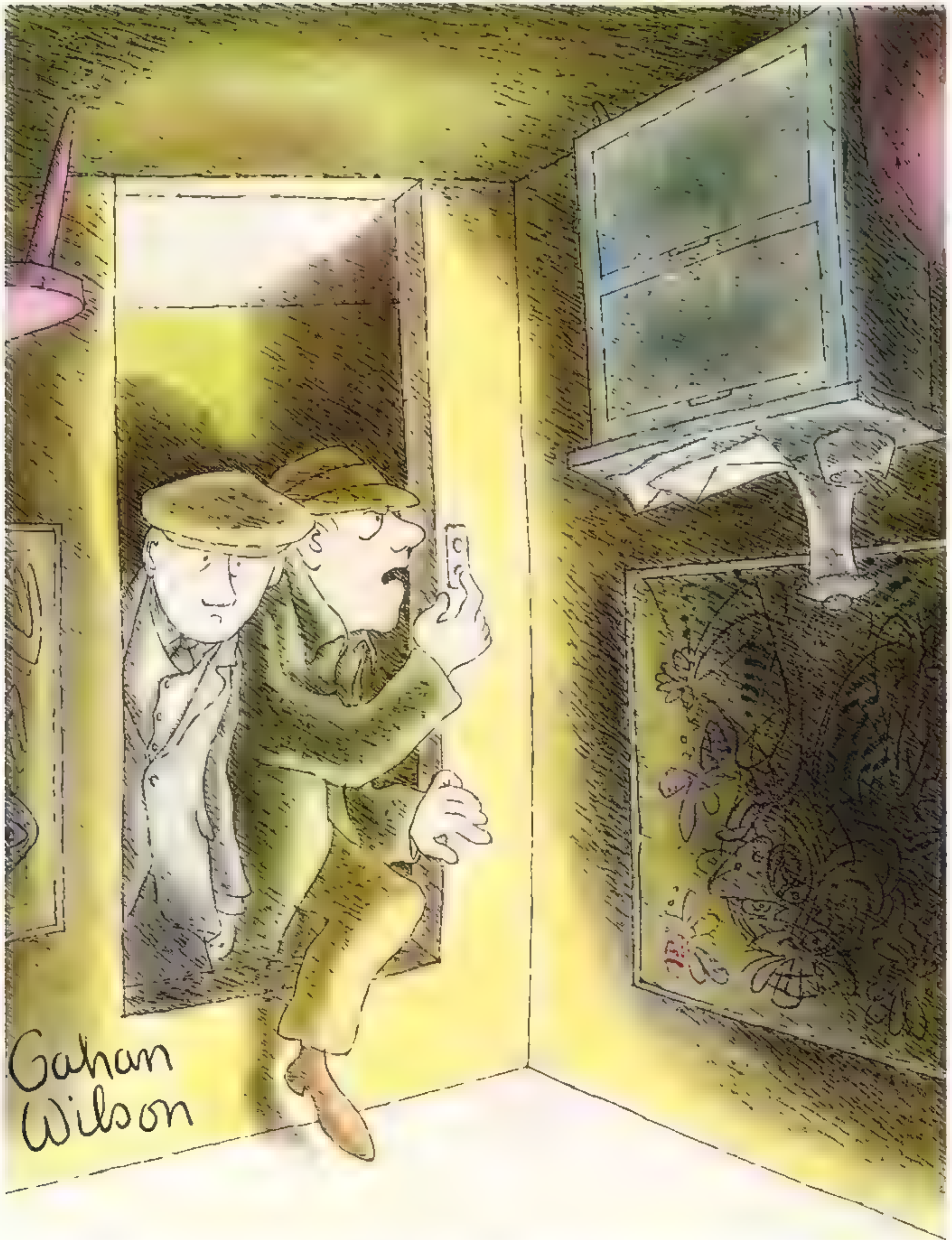




"Harry! You?"



*"Gee, I just wish I had the words to describe this scene
to you fellows back on earth...!"*



"That blasted maid's got everything upside-down again!"





"Take my word for it, sir—it looks just great on you!"

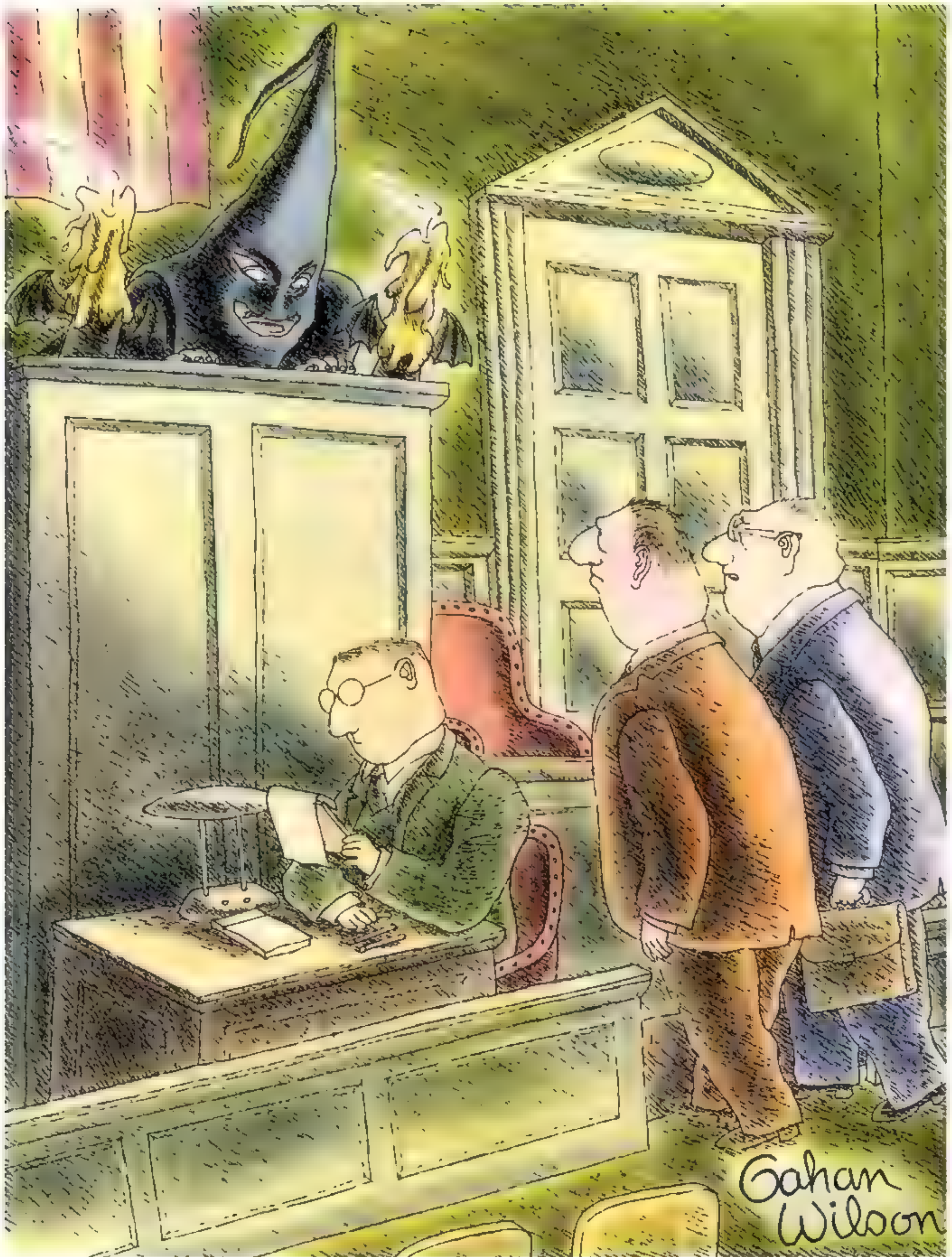


*"It's been awful for business, Mrs. Schultz,
but it was Charlie's last wish."*



"It's a forgery—and a recent one, too."





"It's really a shame we happened to draw this judge..."



"Man, it's just like you said it would be — totally unspoiled!"



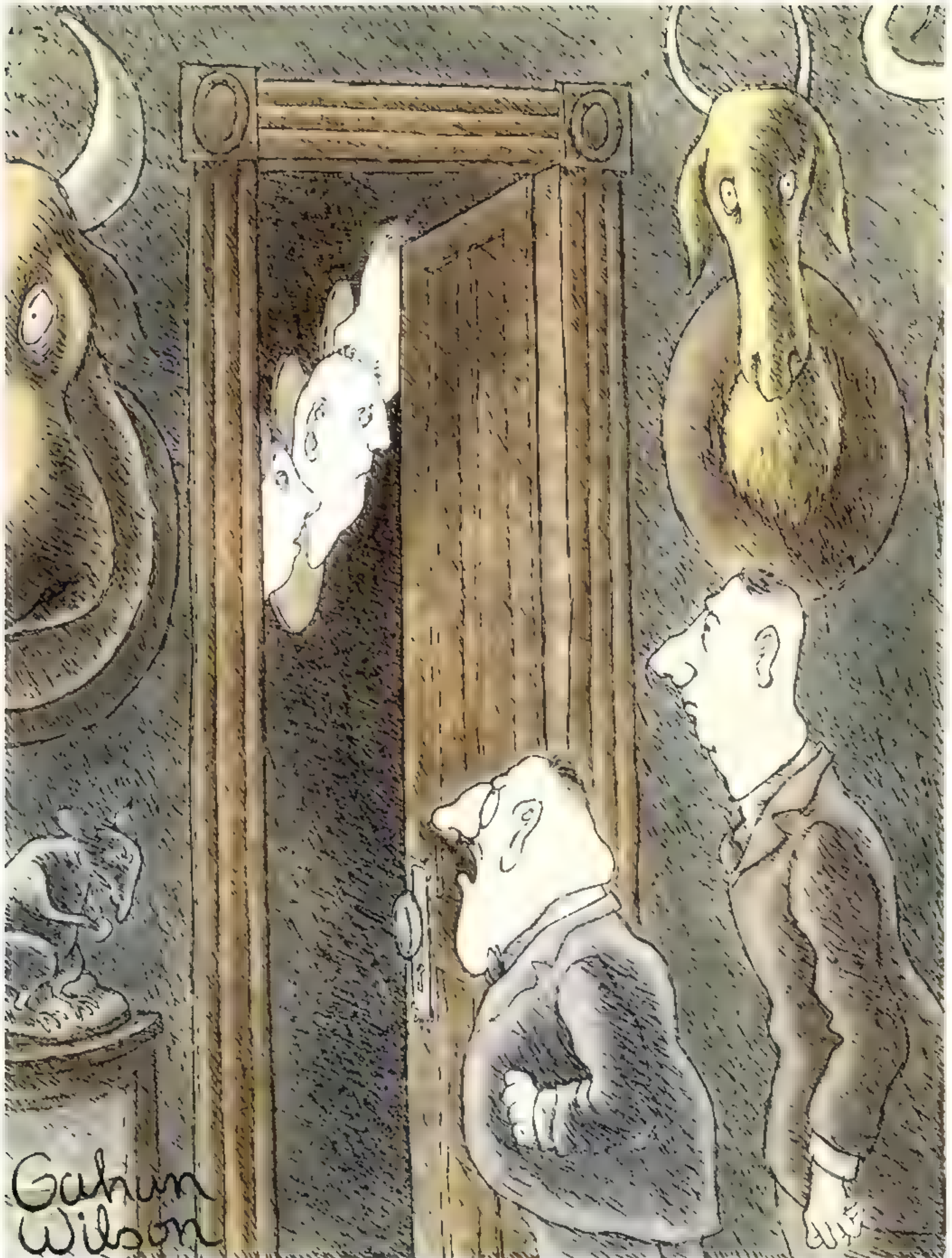
"You mean this goes on forever?"



"The door is over here, sir!"



*"It isn't much of a dragon, but then,
she wasn't much of a maiden."*



"Confound it, staff knows this door's to be kept locked!"

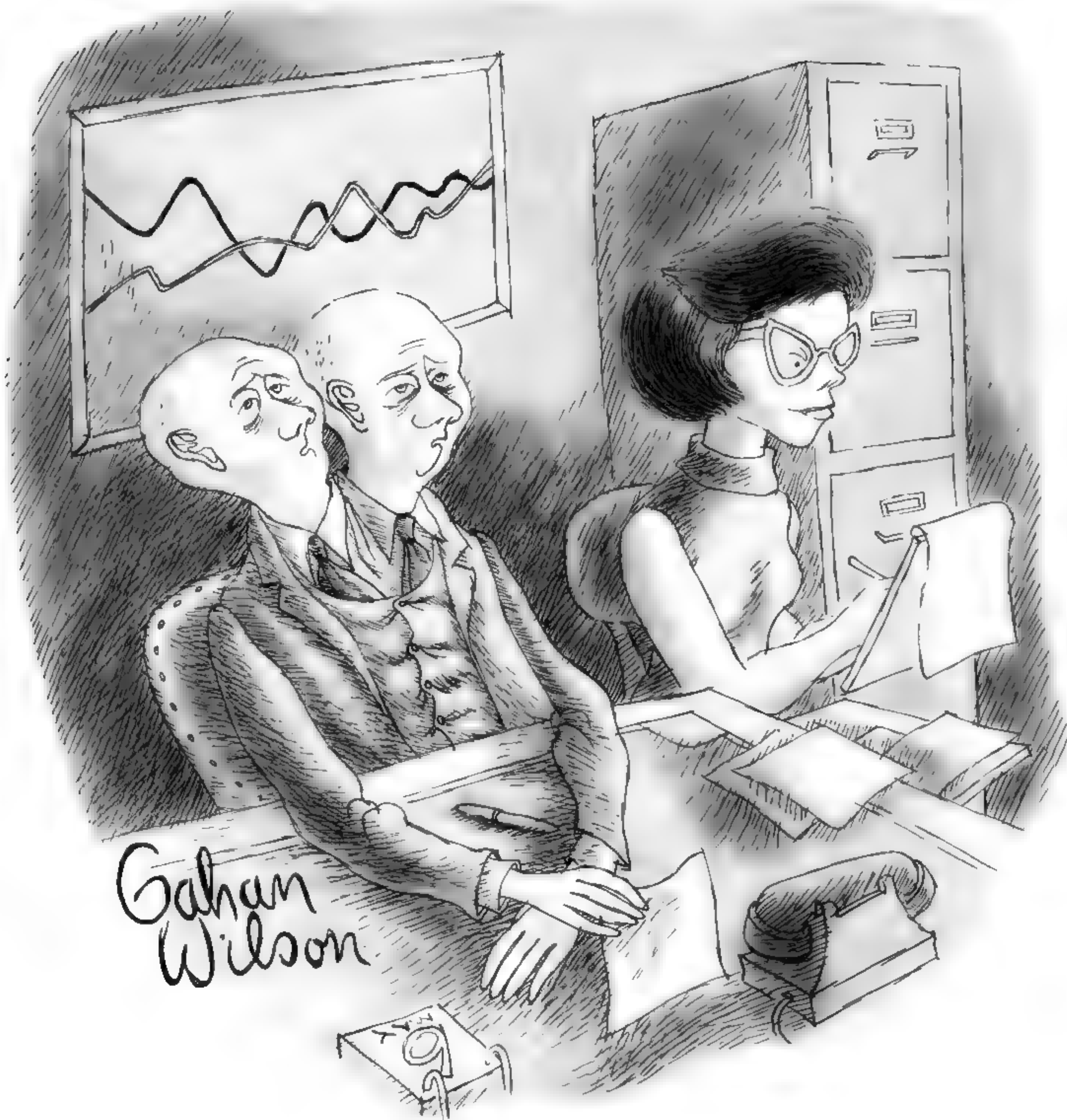


Gahan Wilson

"It looks as if Bodecker's project has gotten completely out of hand."

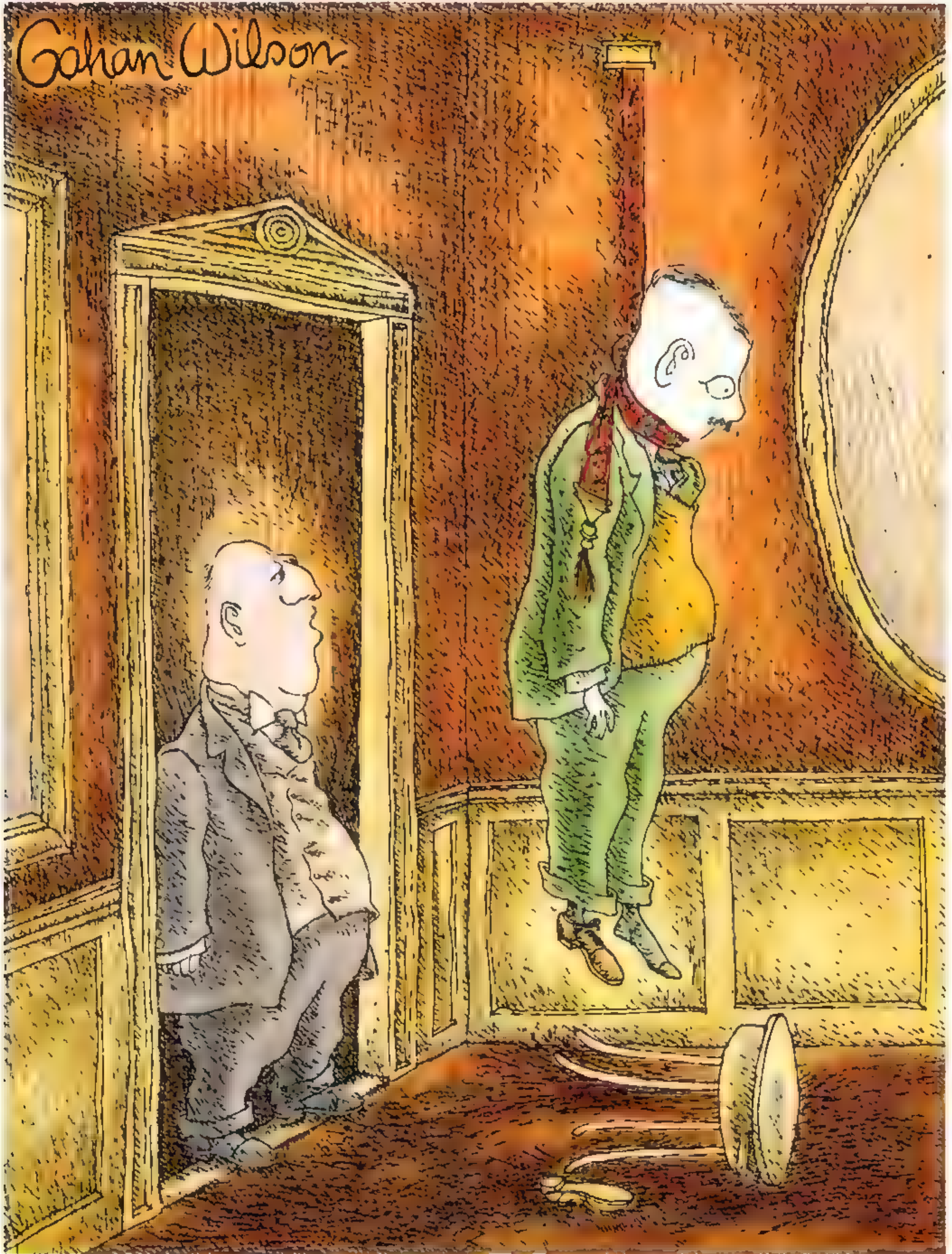


"Where did we go wrong, Mother? Where did we go wrong?"

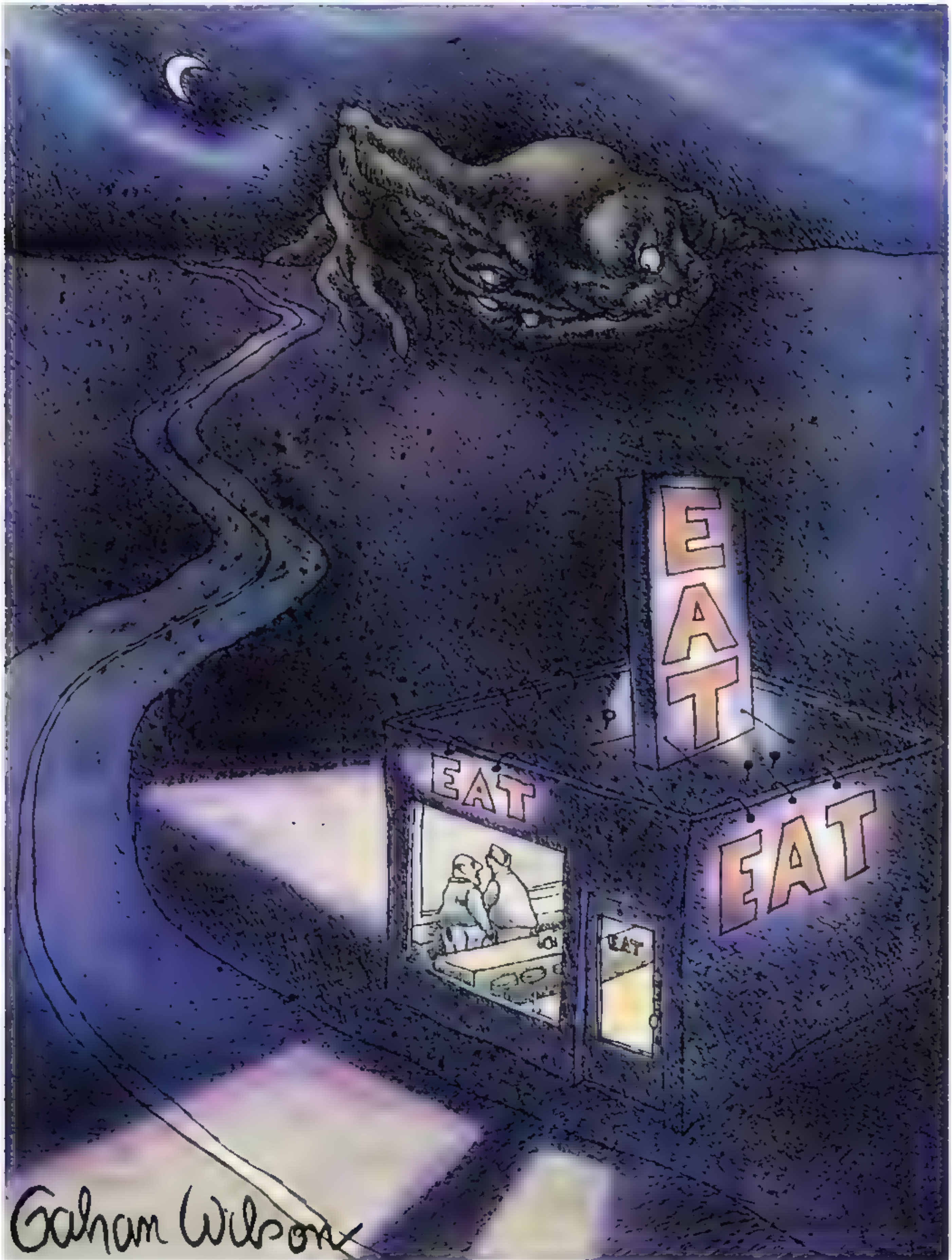


Graham
Wilson

"...We remain, sincerely yours...."



"You rang, sir?"



Graham Wilson

"My God—do you suppose it can read?!"



"I appreciate your dropping by, Harry."

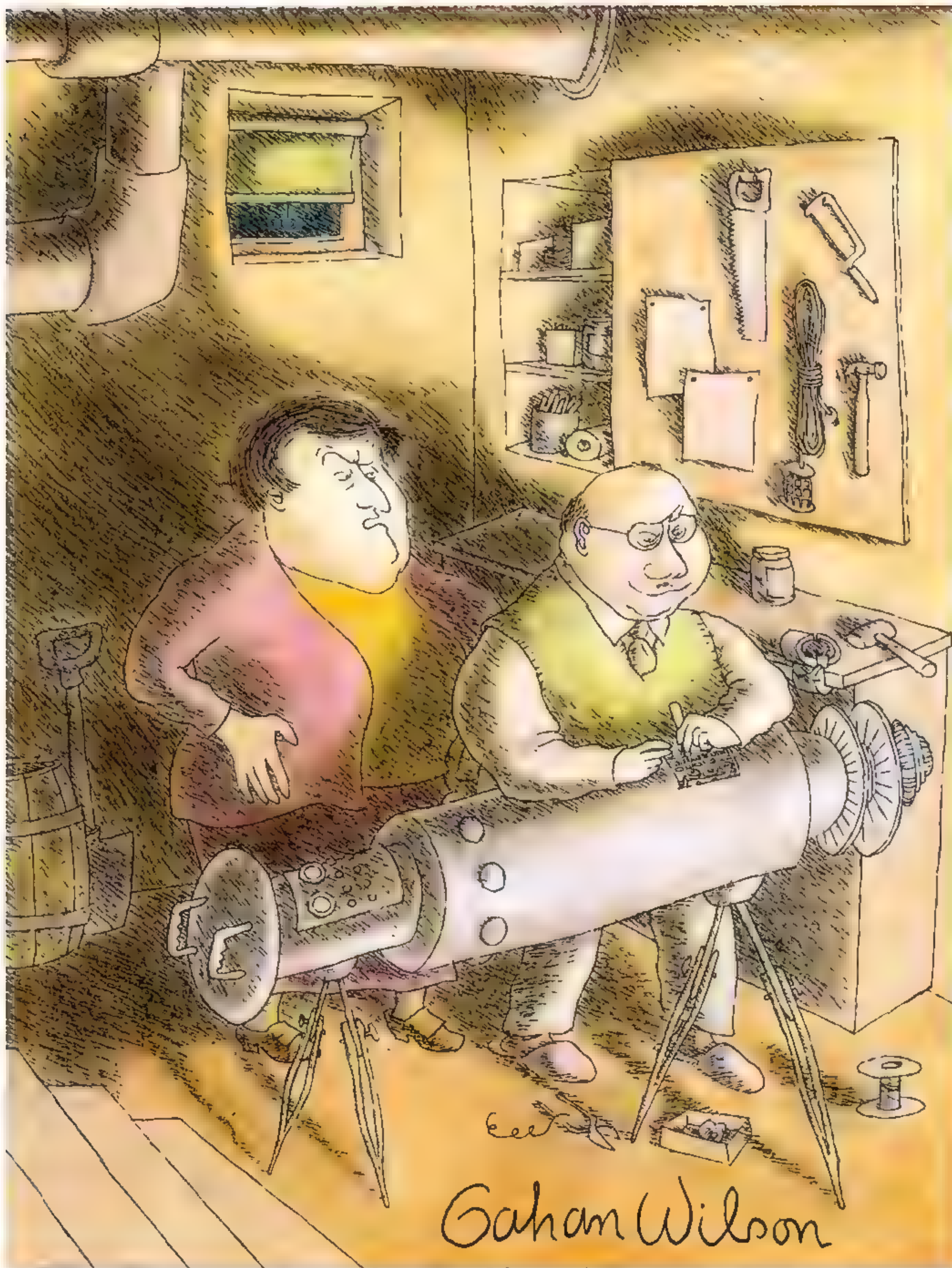


*"I say, Sir Reginald, have you noticed anything
peculiar about this voyage?"*





"Now, for God's sake, Harrington, don't let him convince you!"



*"...And just what do you think you're going to do with
your silly death ray once you've finished it?!"*

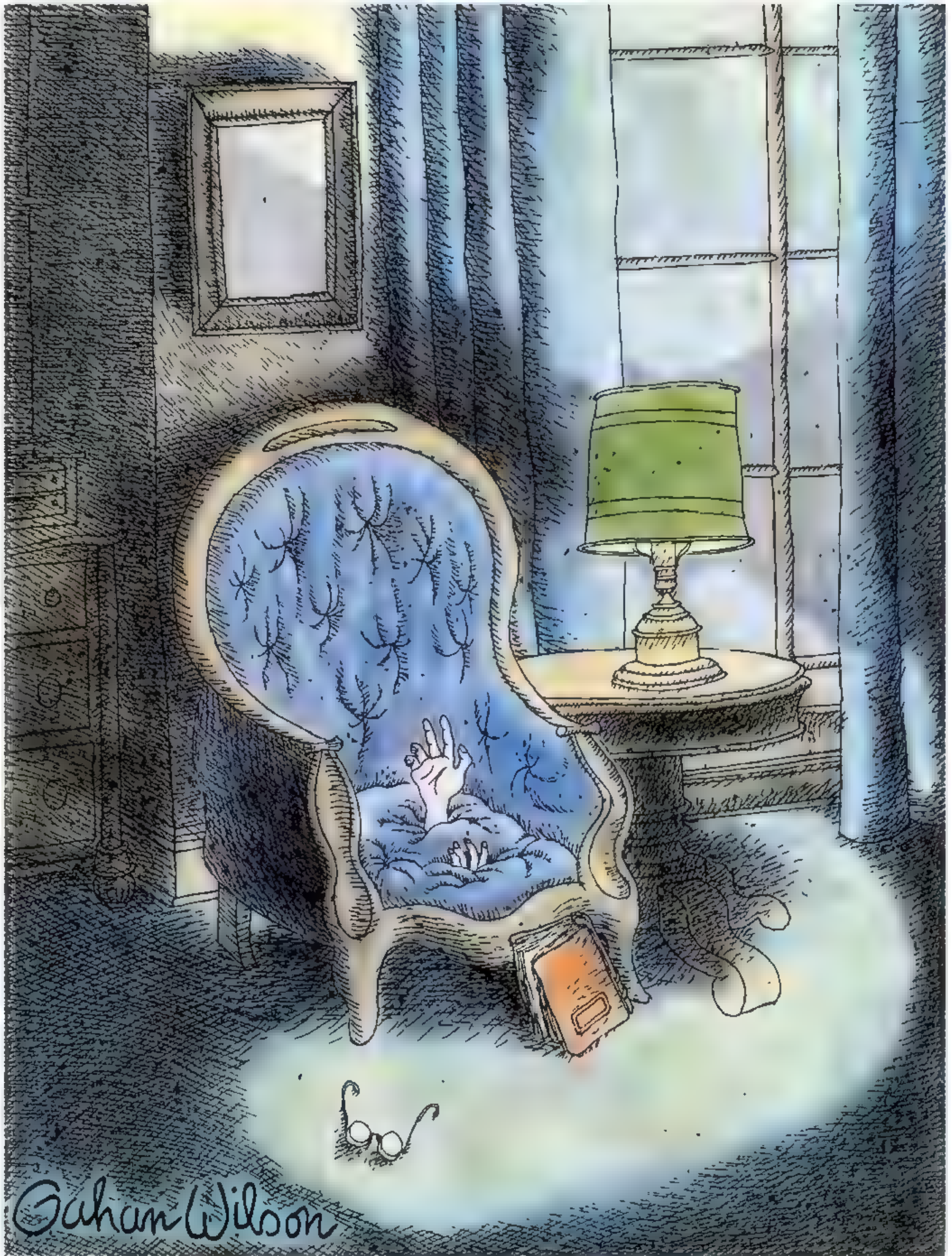


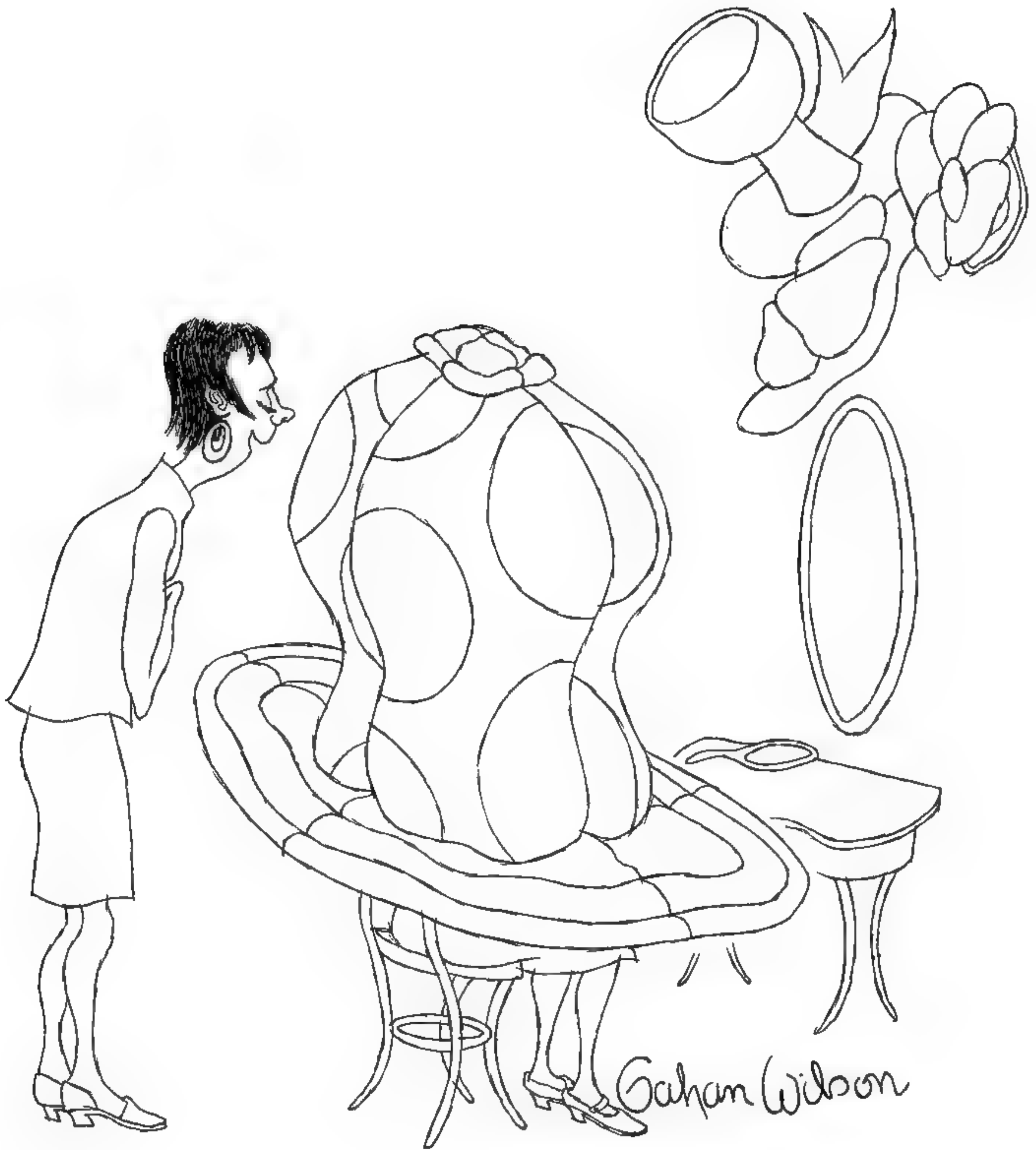
"Don't you worry, Mr. Kiernan—we'll have you out of there in no time!"





*"I'm beginning to have serious doubts about the efficiency
of those psychological job-placement tests."*





"Perhaps madam would like something a teensy bit smaller?"



"The set you ordered arrived today, sir!"

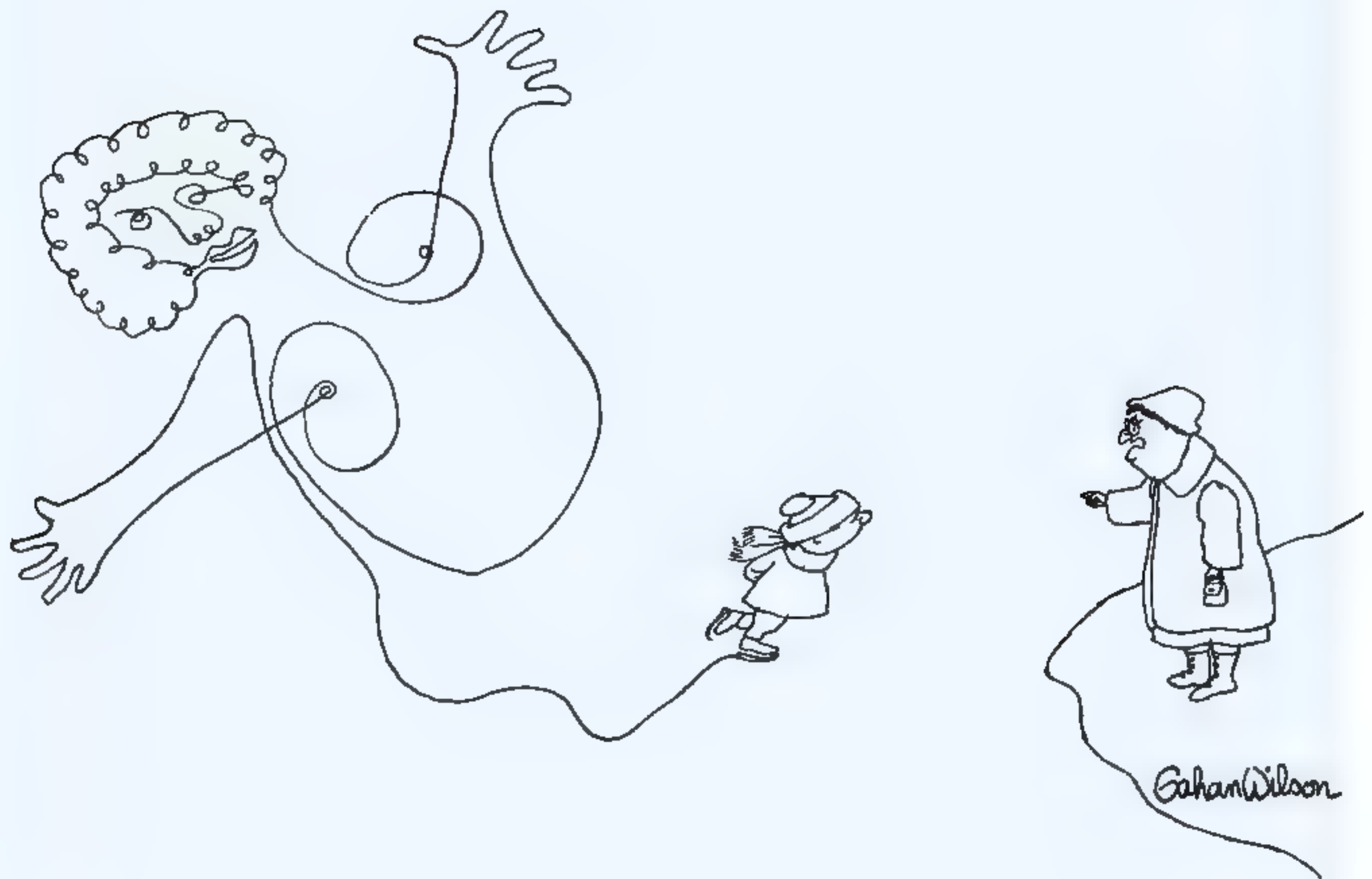


*"I know, I know you're recorded—but that doesn't
alter the fact that I love you!"*

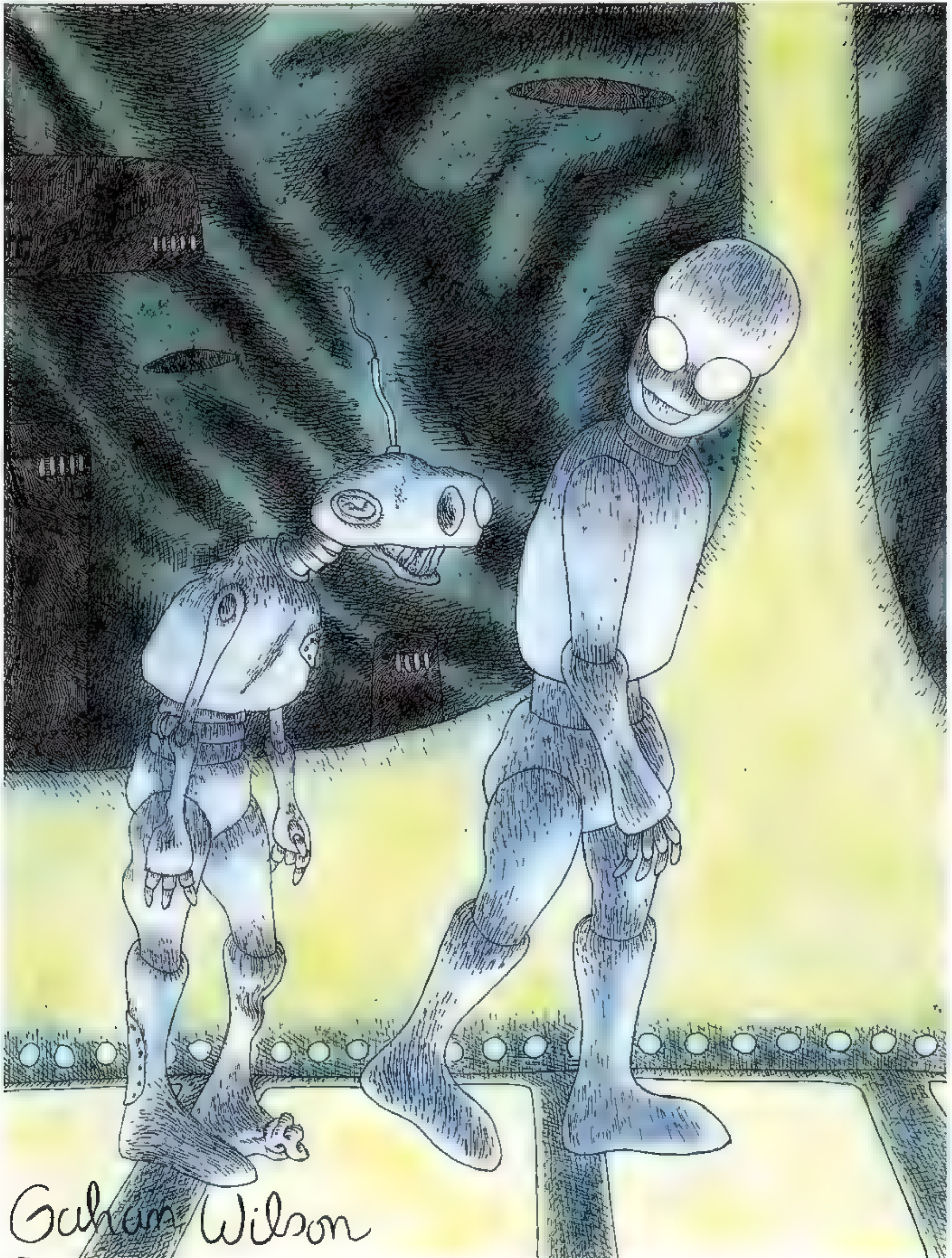


*"I'll let you know the meaning of life when
I'm damn good and ready!"*



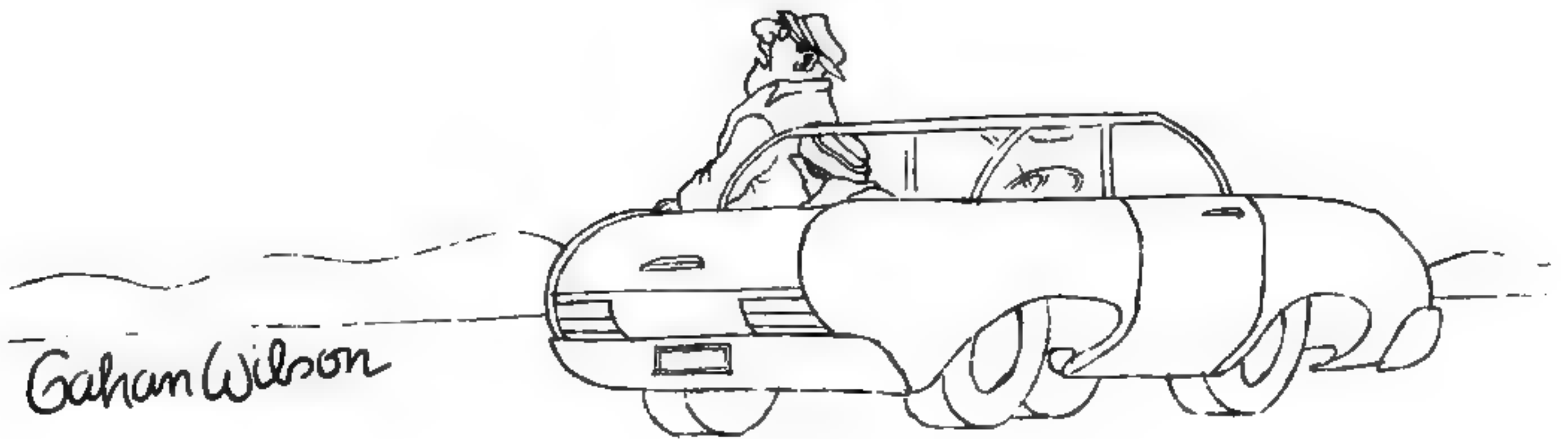
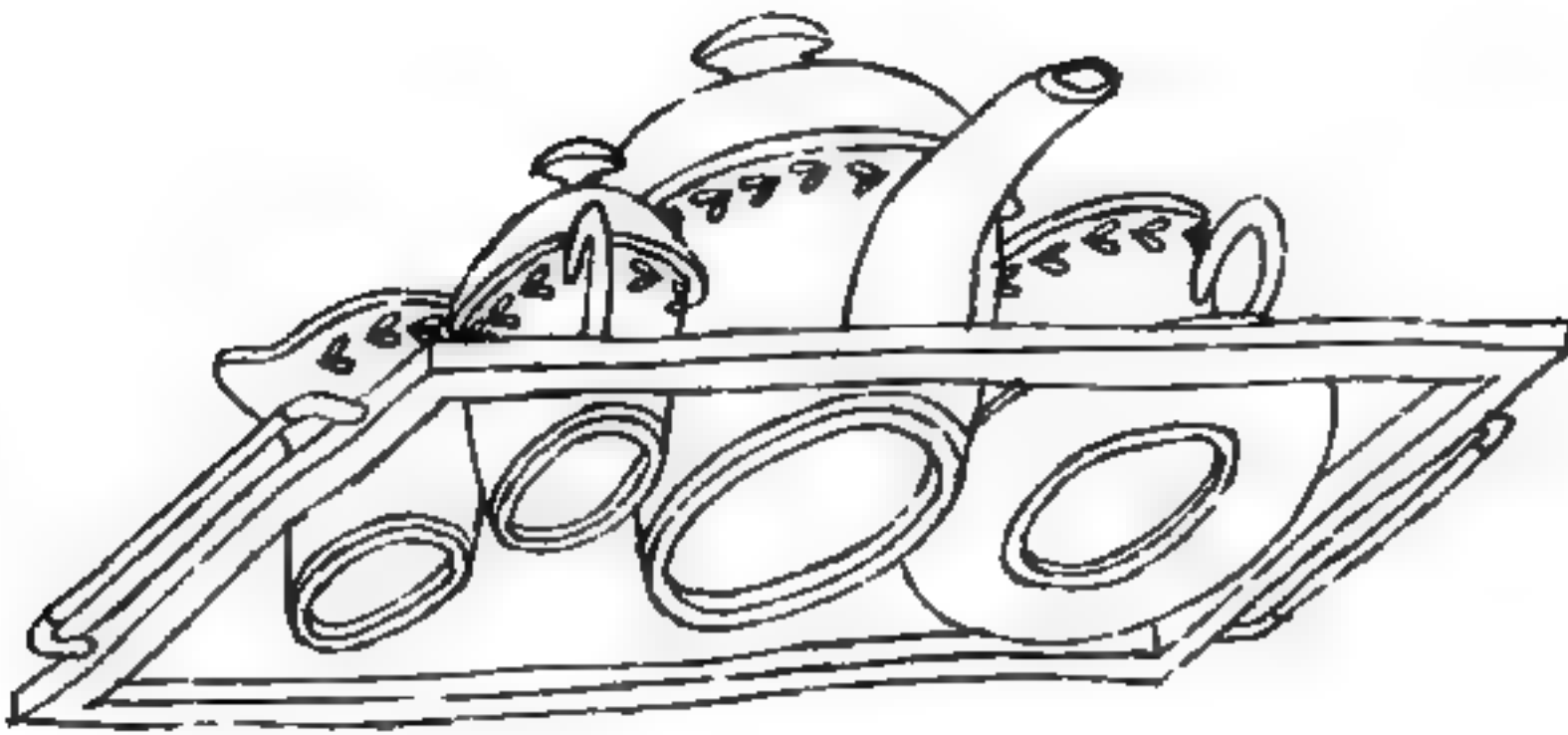


"You get off that ice pond this minute, you filthy little boy!"

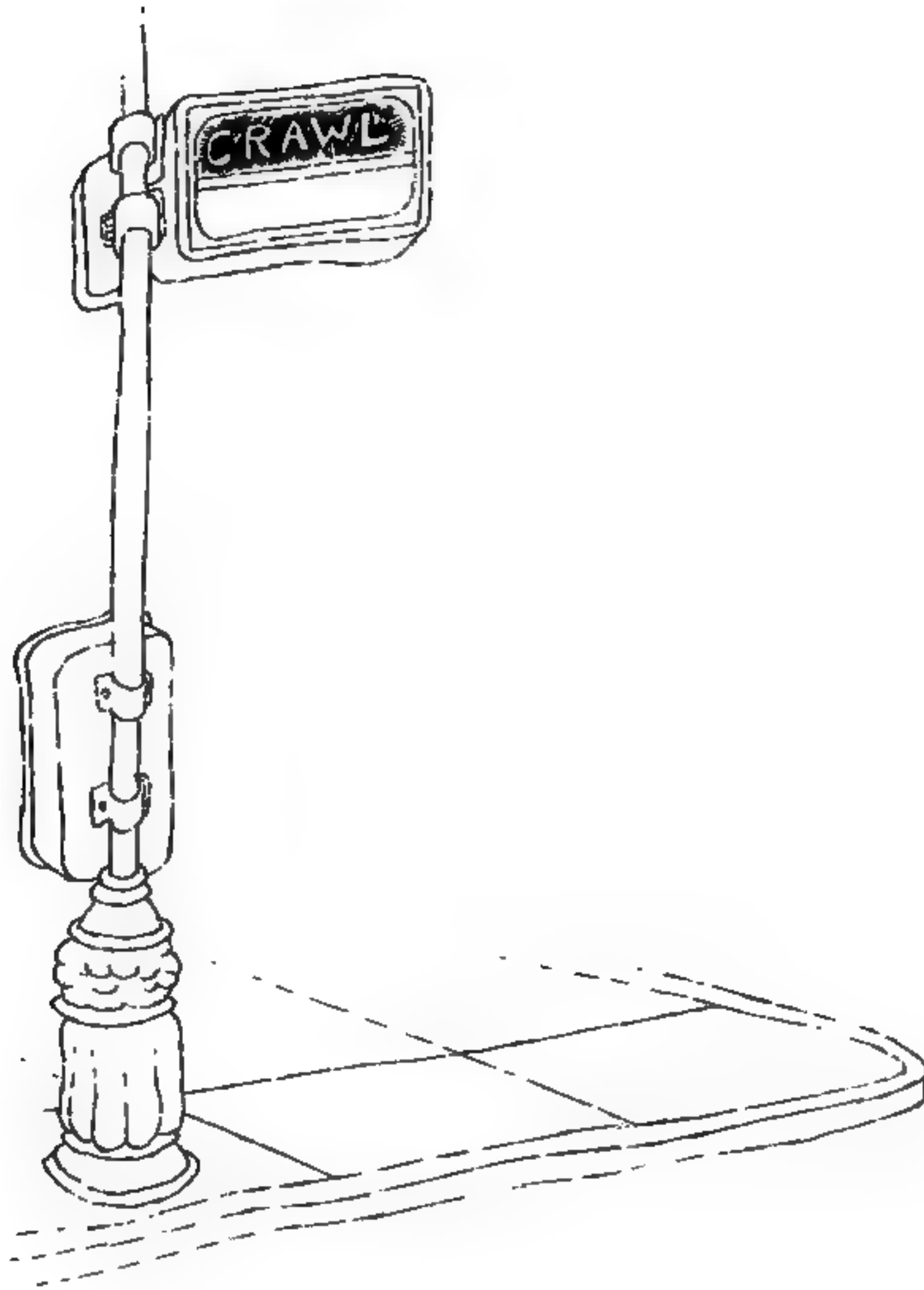


Graham Wilson

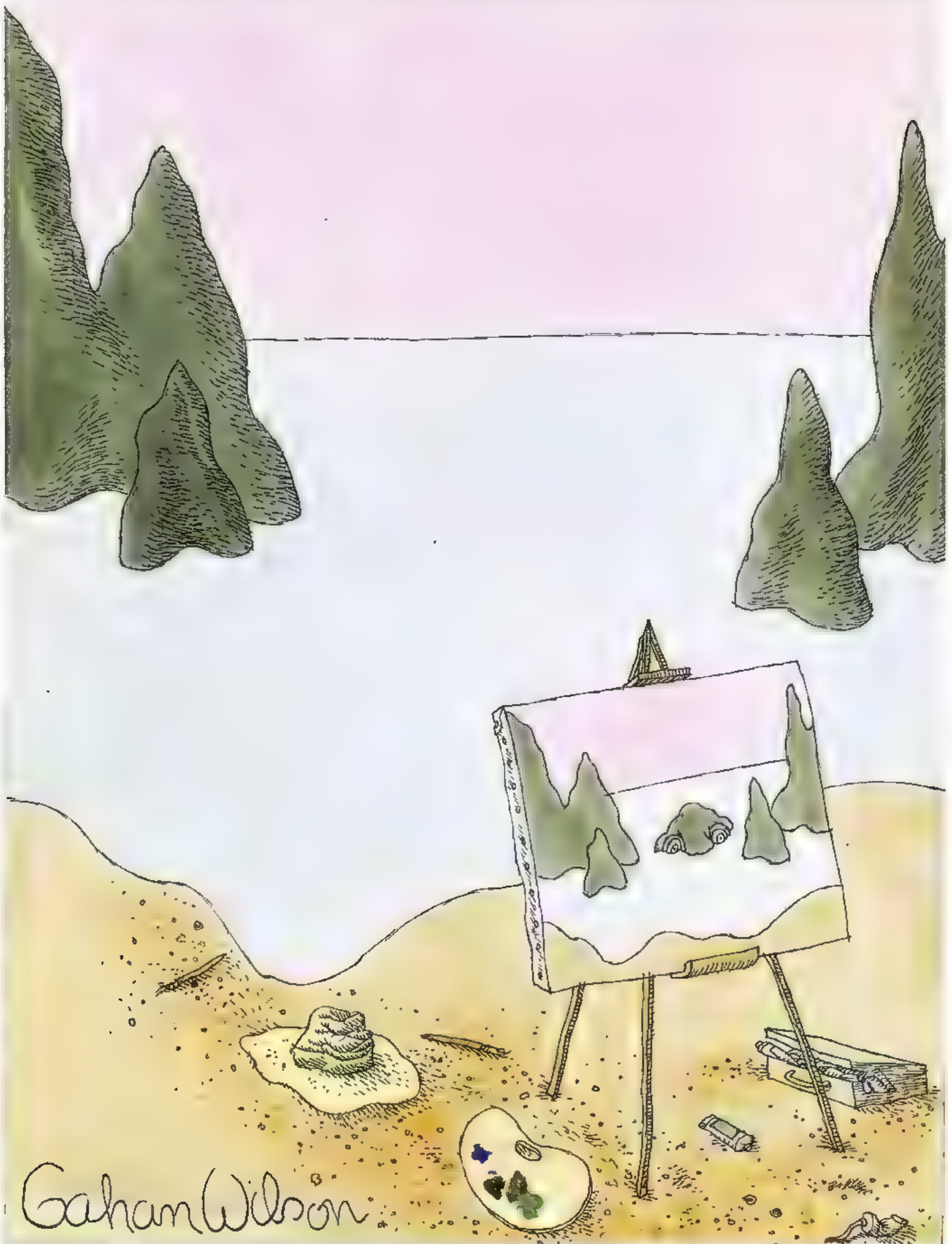
*"...Of course, a new model can't expect to understand how it is
when they discontinue your line and parts get scarce!"*



"I'm afraid they've decided to stop kidding around!"



"What I mean, the cops in this town are tough!"





"How much for just the ring?"





*"Would you care to step out of the shop and see
how it looks in the fog, Mr. Holmes?"*



"Gee, it's still just the same as when I was a little kid!"

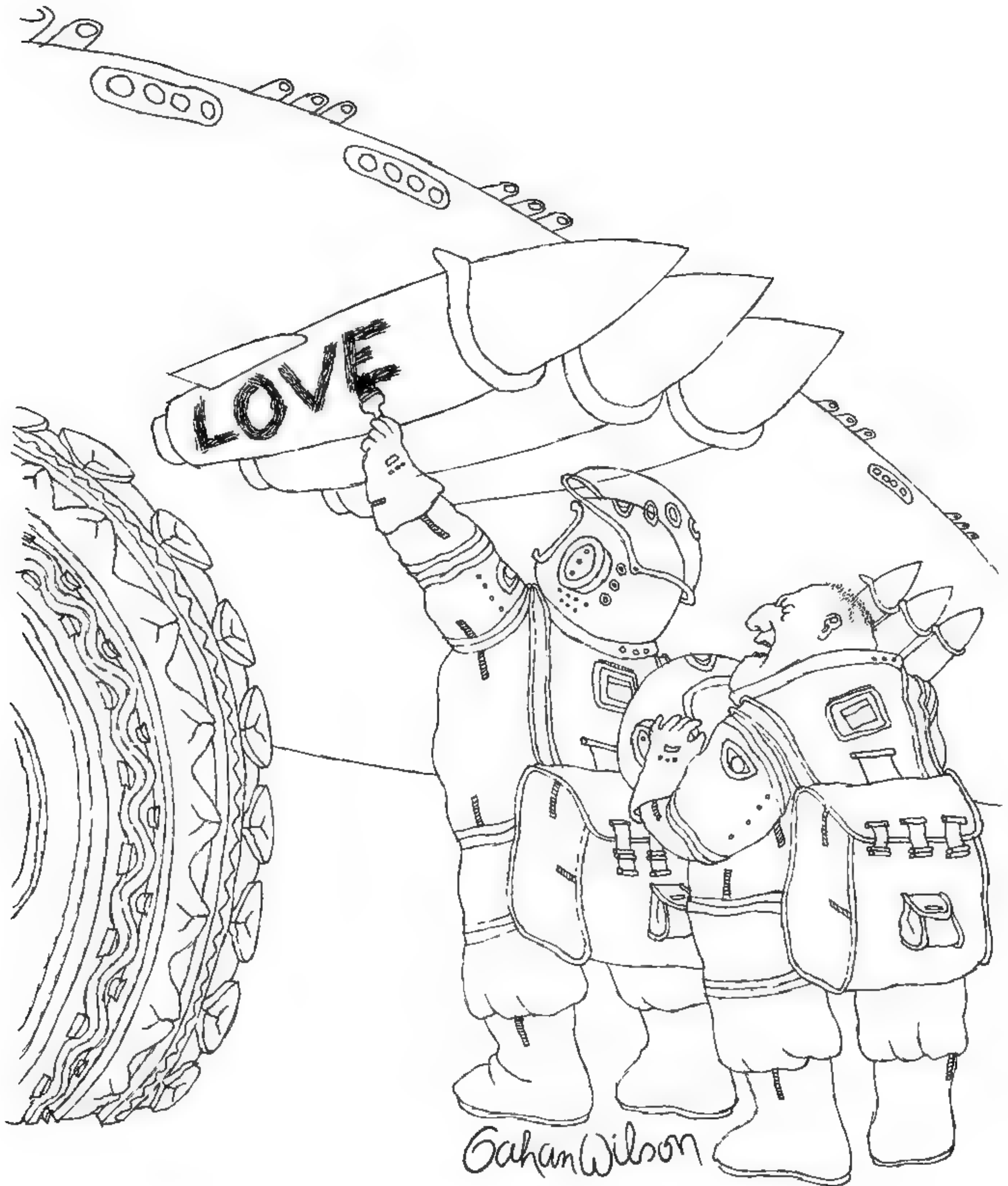


*"Come on, Charlie, let me in on when you guys
are making the break!"*



Graham Wilson

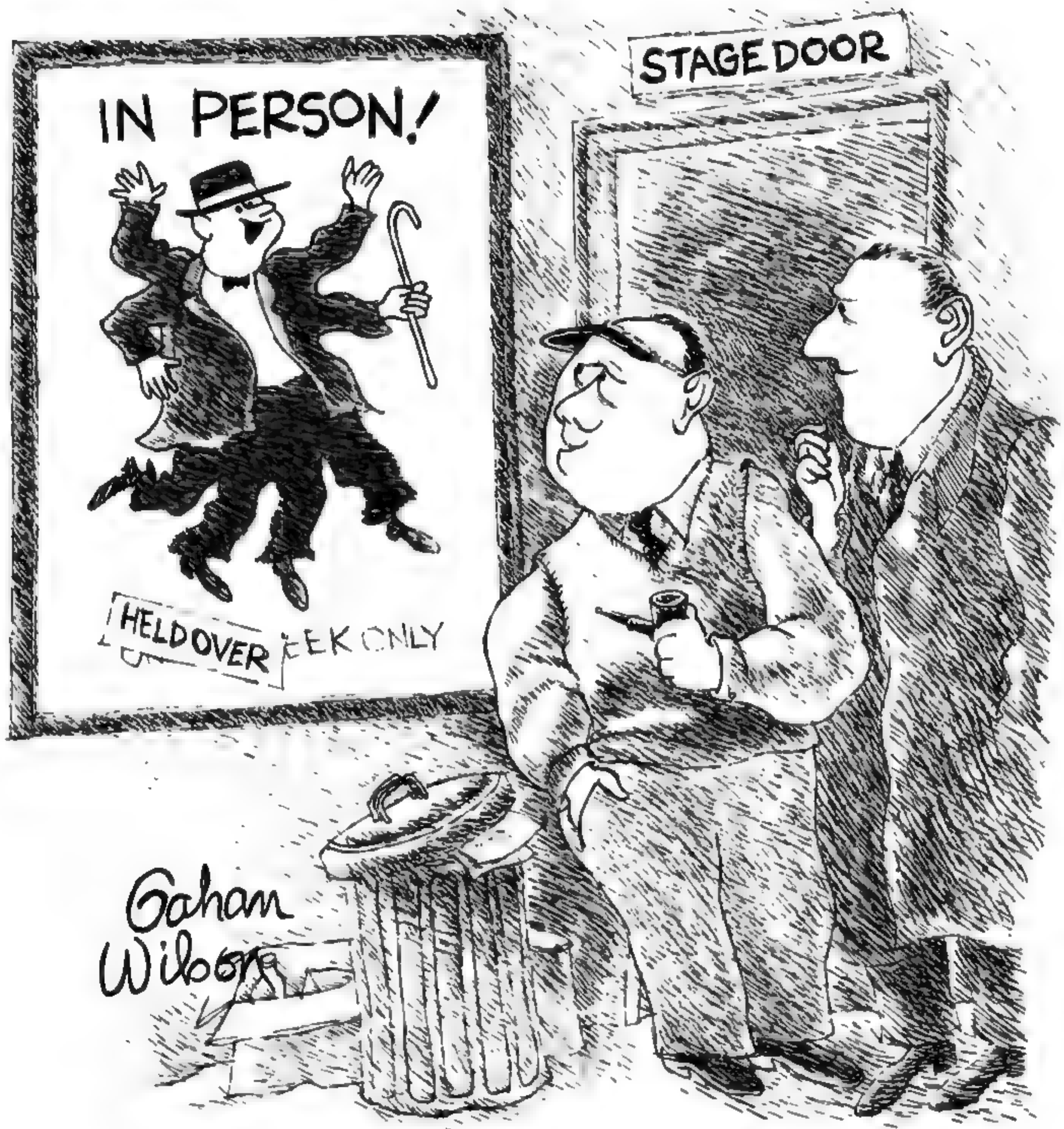
"It's a break!"



"You can't have it both ways, kid."

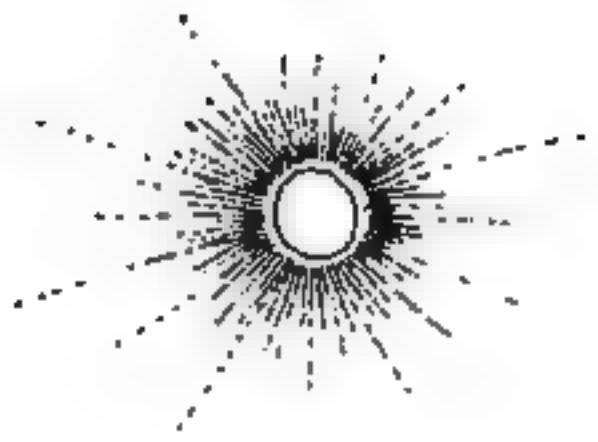


"Easy on the fast balls, will you, kid?"



"Yessir, after they made him, they broke the mold!"





"Looks like we can't expect to find much in that direction."



"You got to hand it to Bloody Eddy—it's the last place in the world you'd think of as a hide-out."



"I'M SORRY
ABOUT
ALL THESE
INTERUP-
TIONS"



"I'm sorry, madam, but these units are for display purposes only."

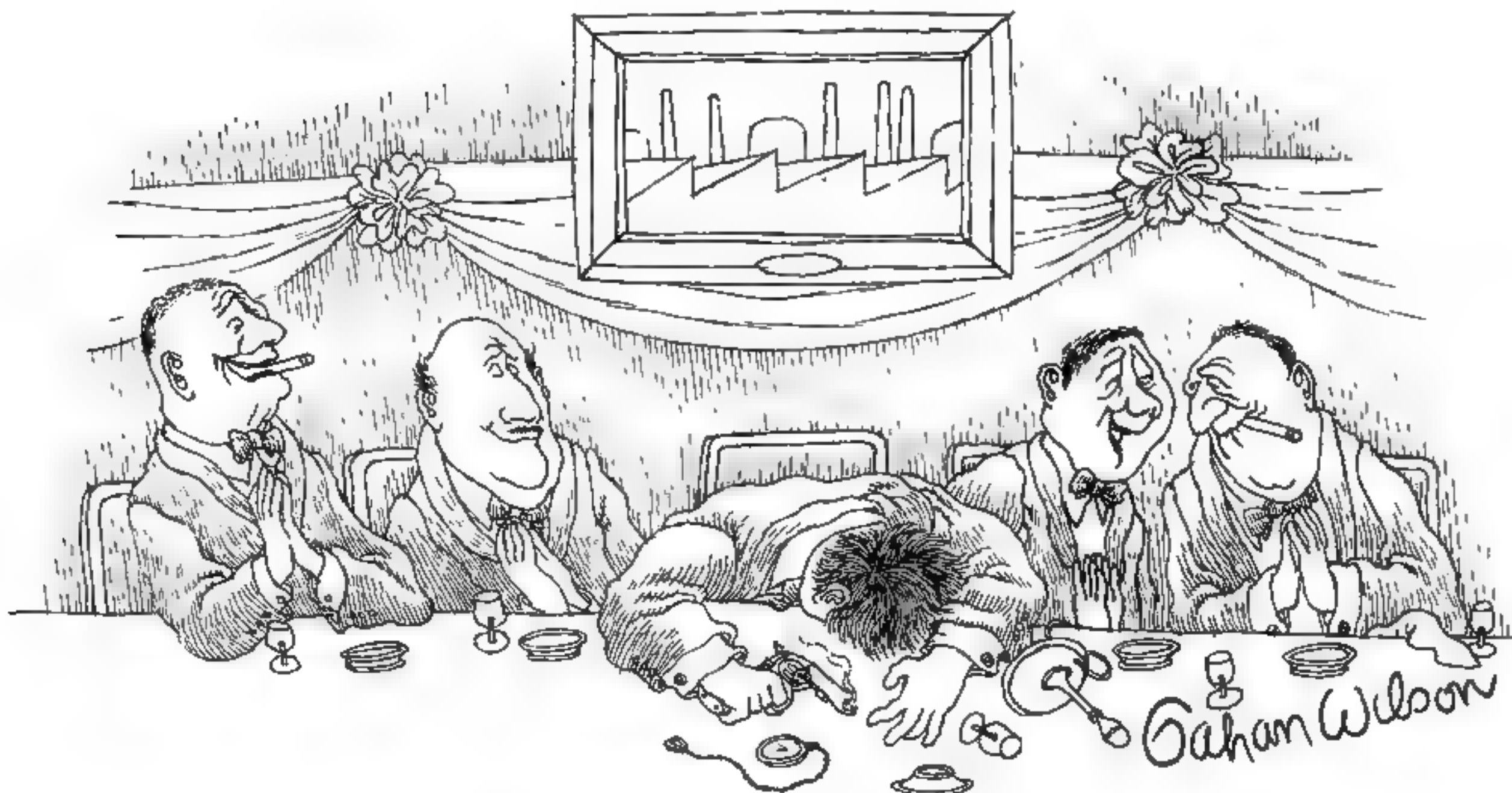


"No blindfold, thanks."



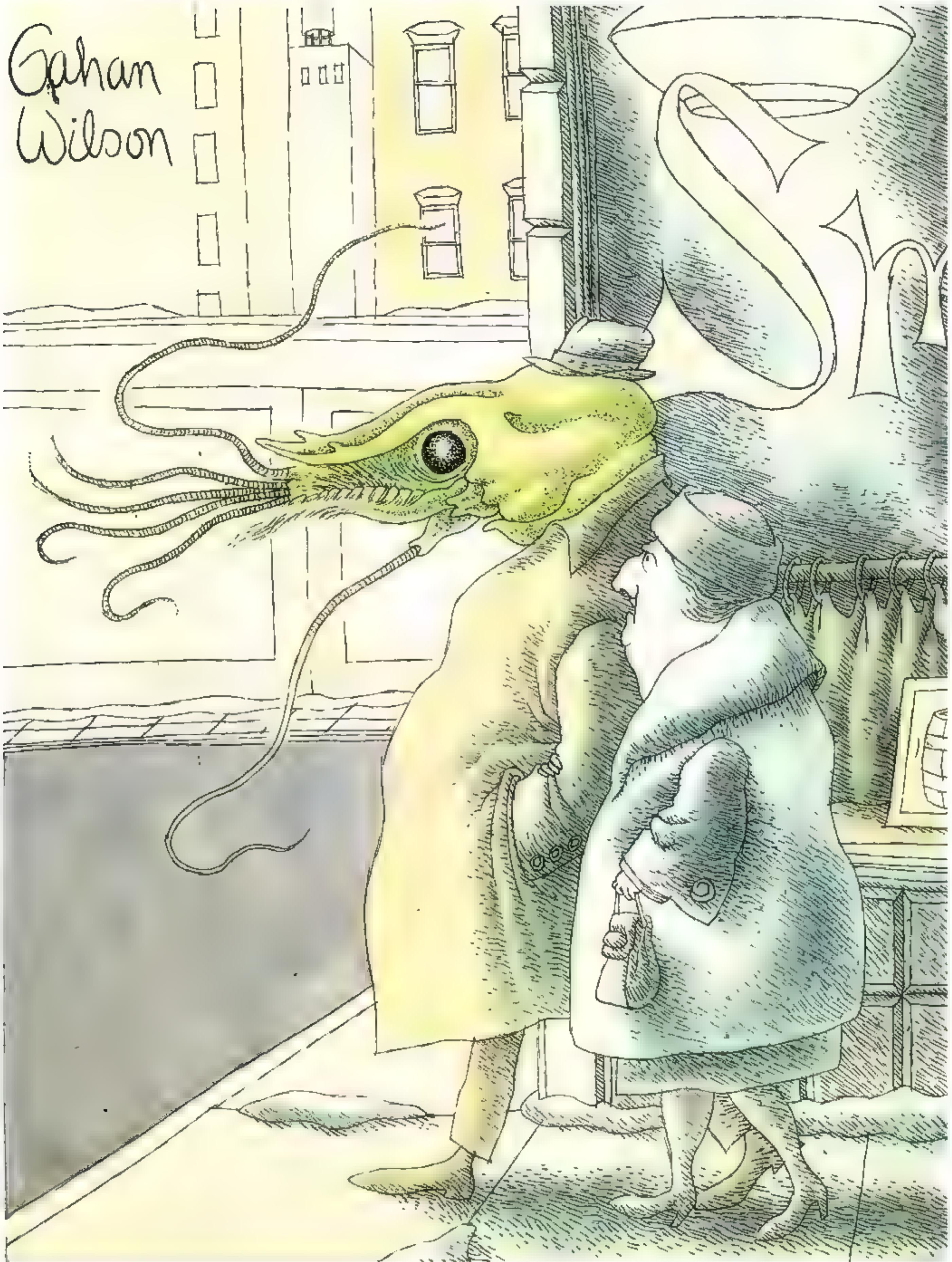


"Bad news on that new brightening formula, chief."



"...Altogether a really unique retirement speech."

Graham
Wilson



"Harry, I really think you ought to go to the doctor."

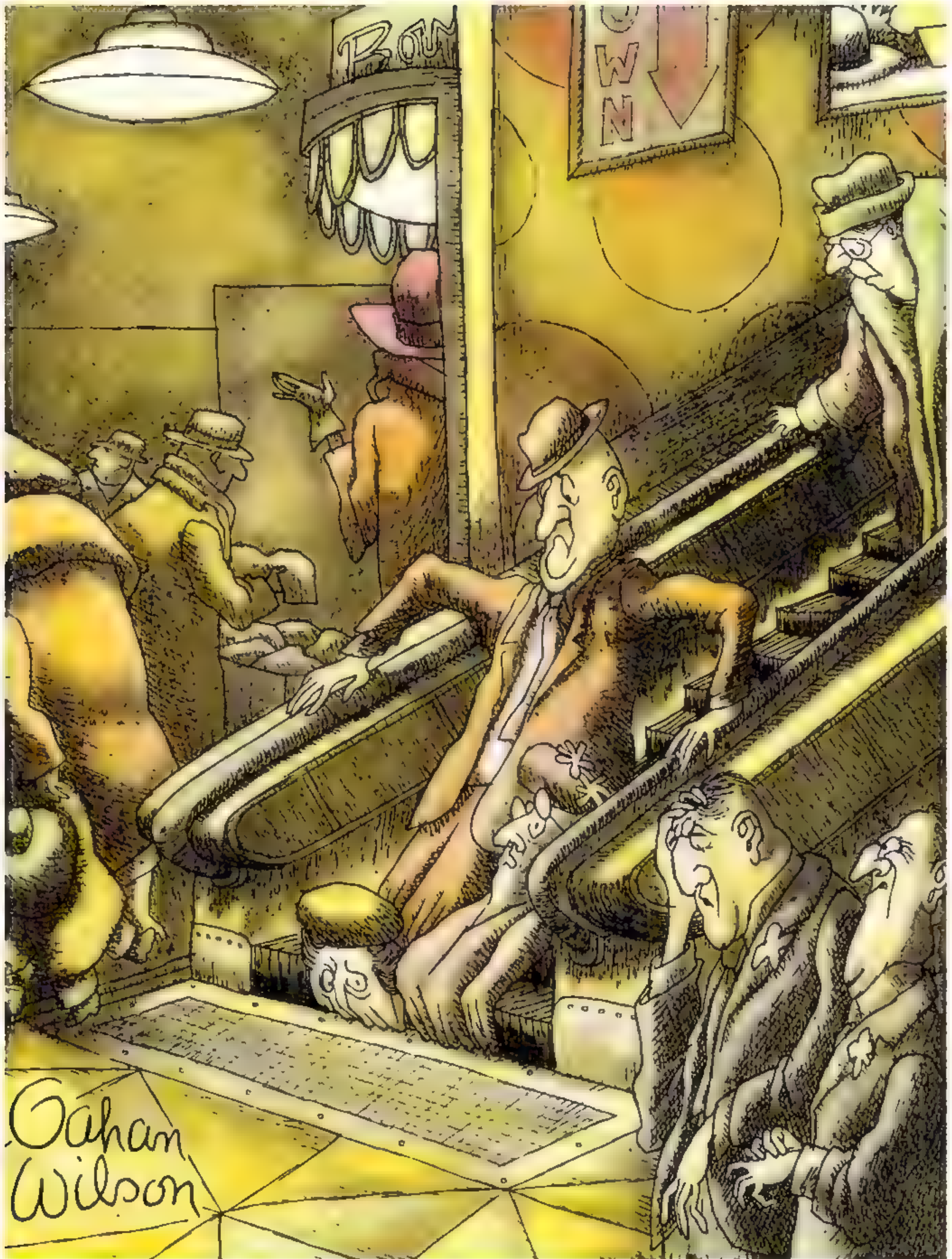


*"I don't know what it is, but, for God's sake,
don't do anything to frighten it away!"*



Graham Wilson

"Honestly, Harry, I'll never tease you again for carrying around that elephant gun!"



"Oh, God! It's really been one of those days!"



"I designed it with you particularly in mind, Mrs. Dillman!"



"They went together, doctor!"

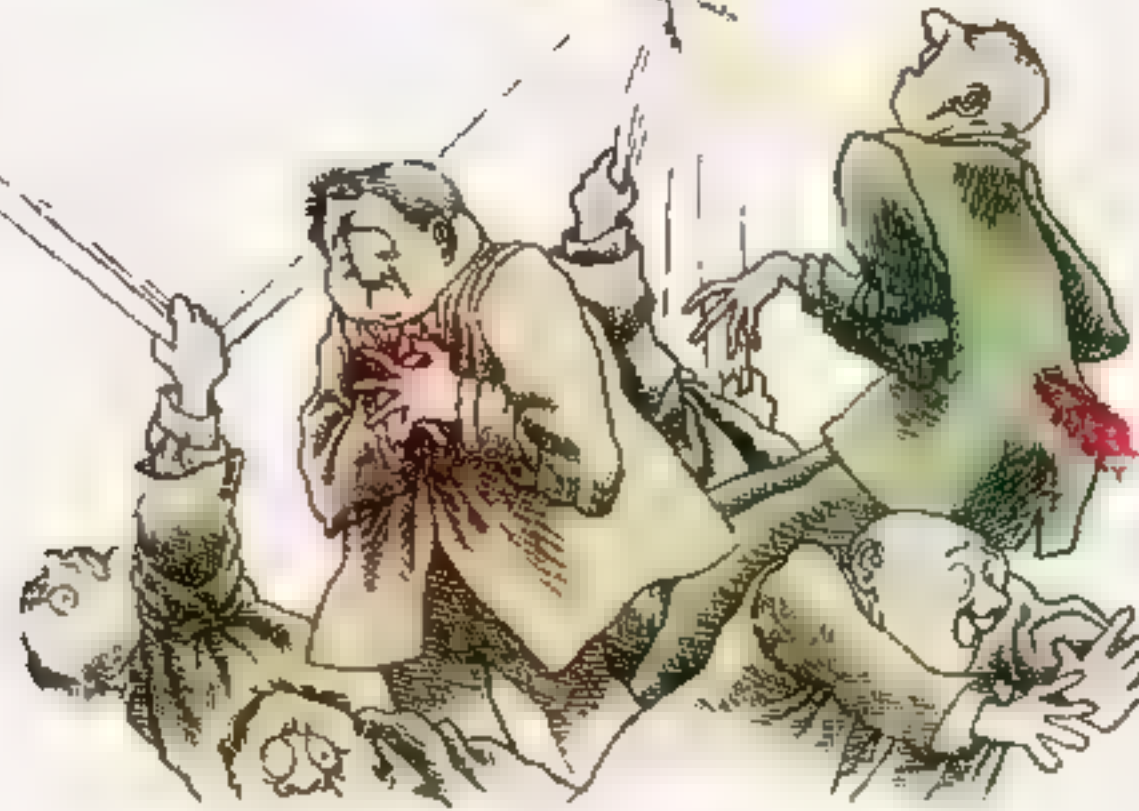


Graham Wilson

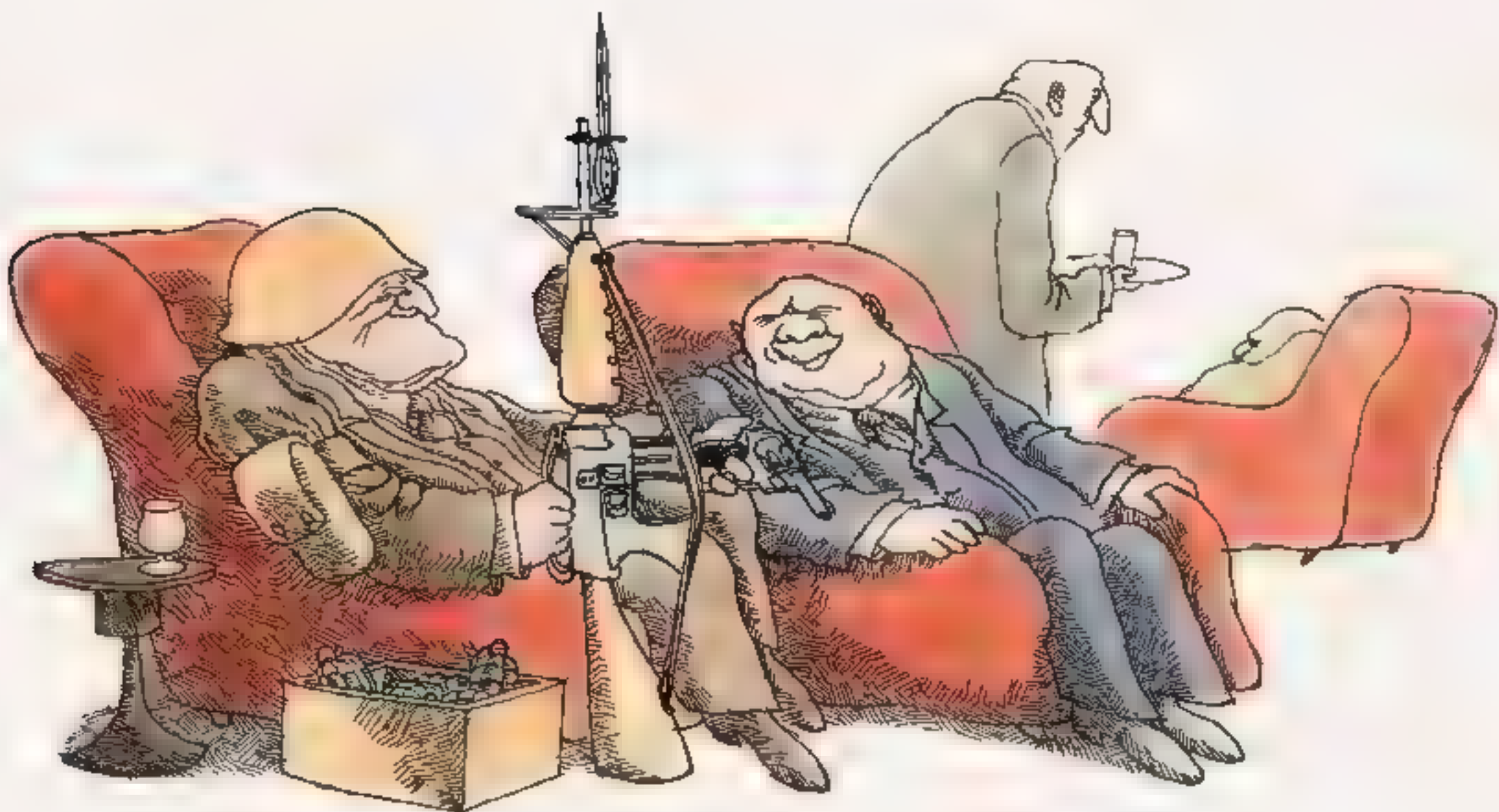


OVERKILL

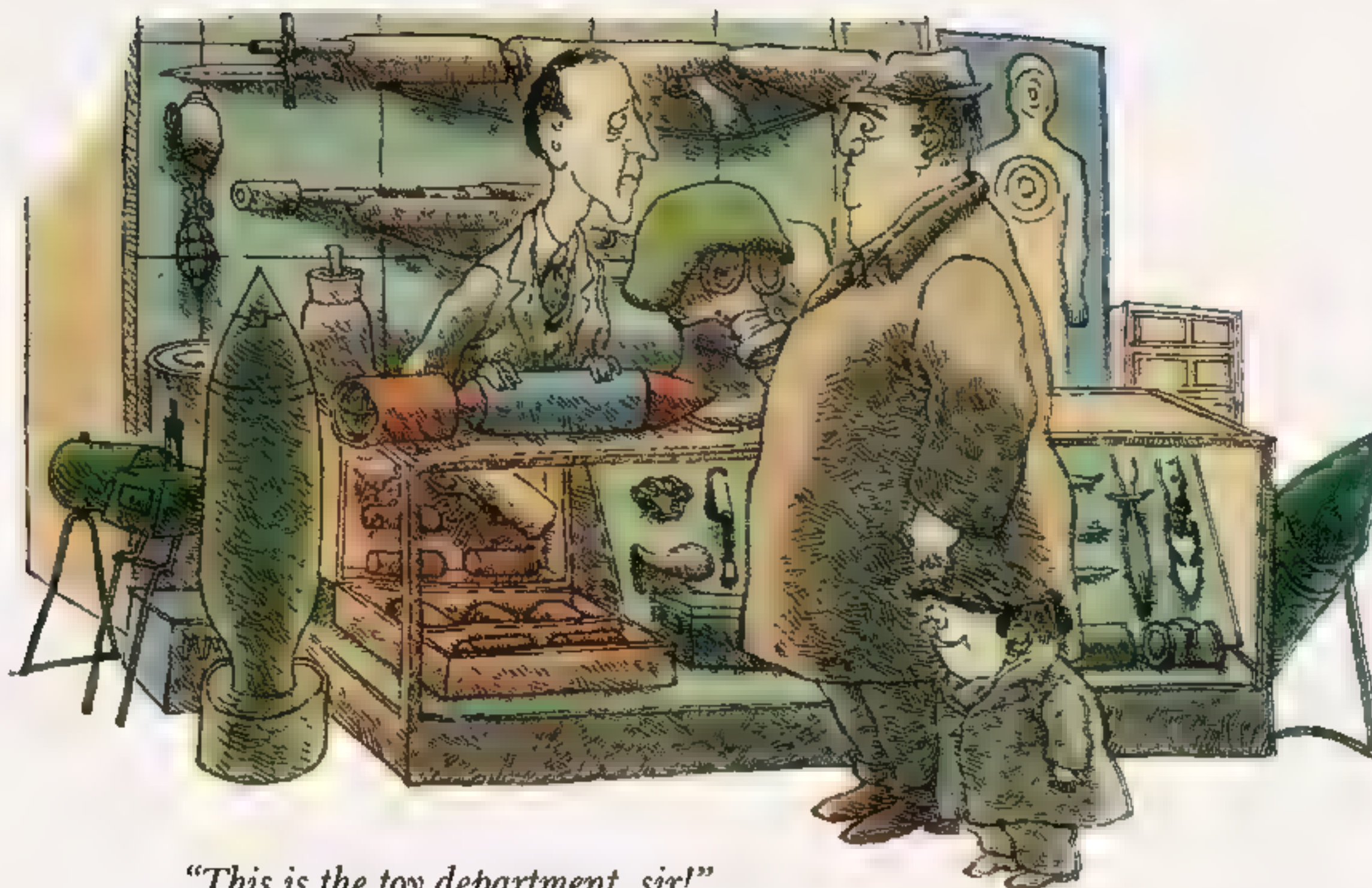
BY Gahan Wilson



"This is really quite a switch!"



"I like to see a man who's prepared, Remson!"



"This is the toy department, sir!"



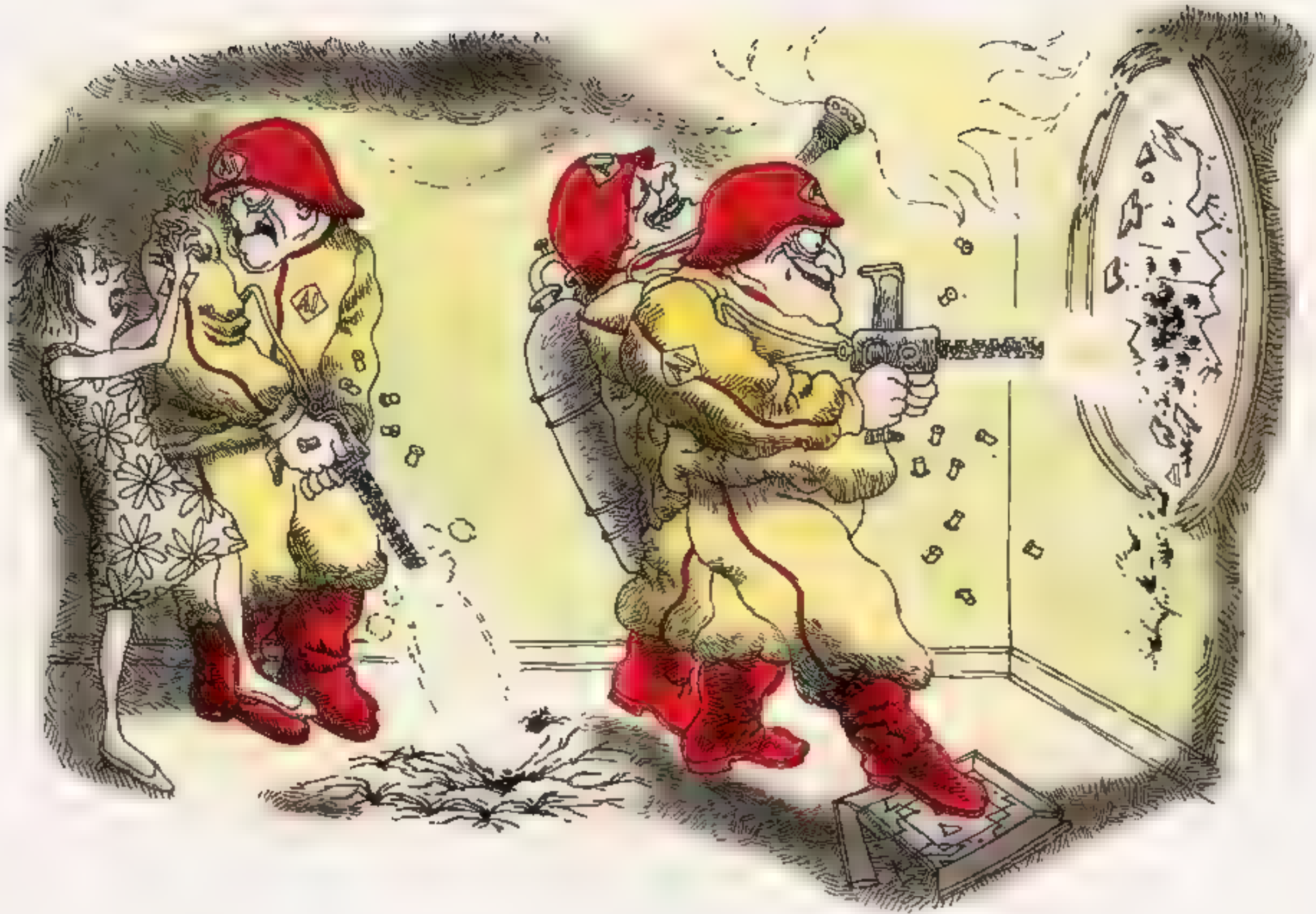
"Well, I guess that pretty well takes care of that riot, eh, Kirby?"



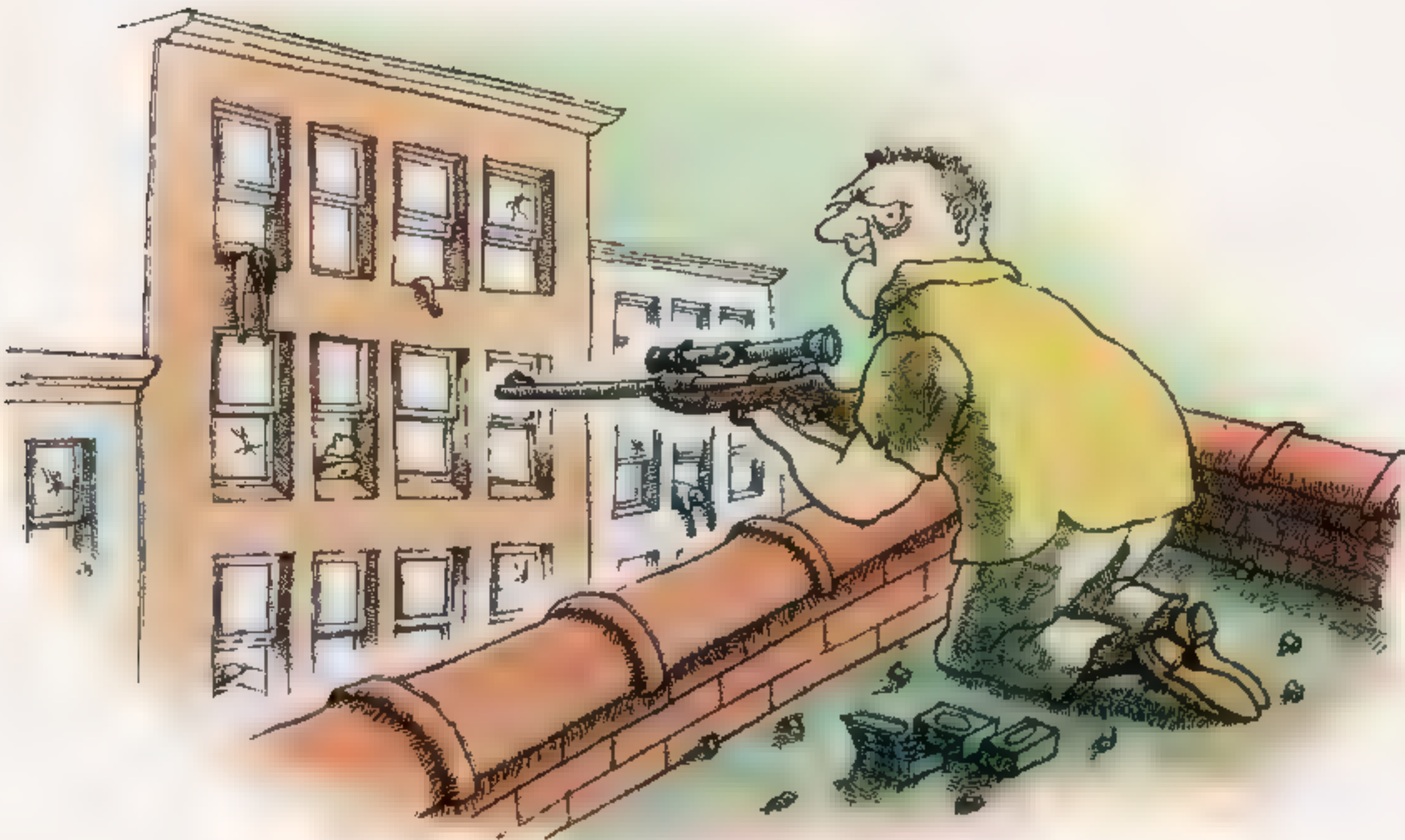
"...And you call yourself a soldier!"



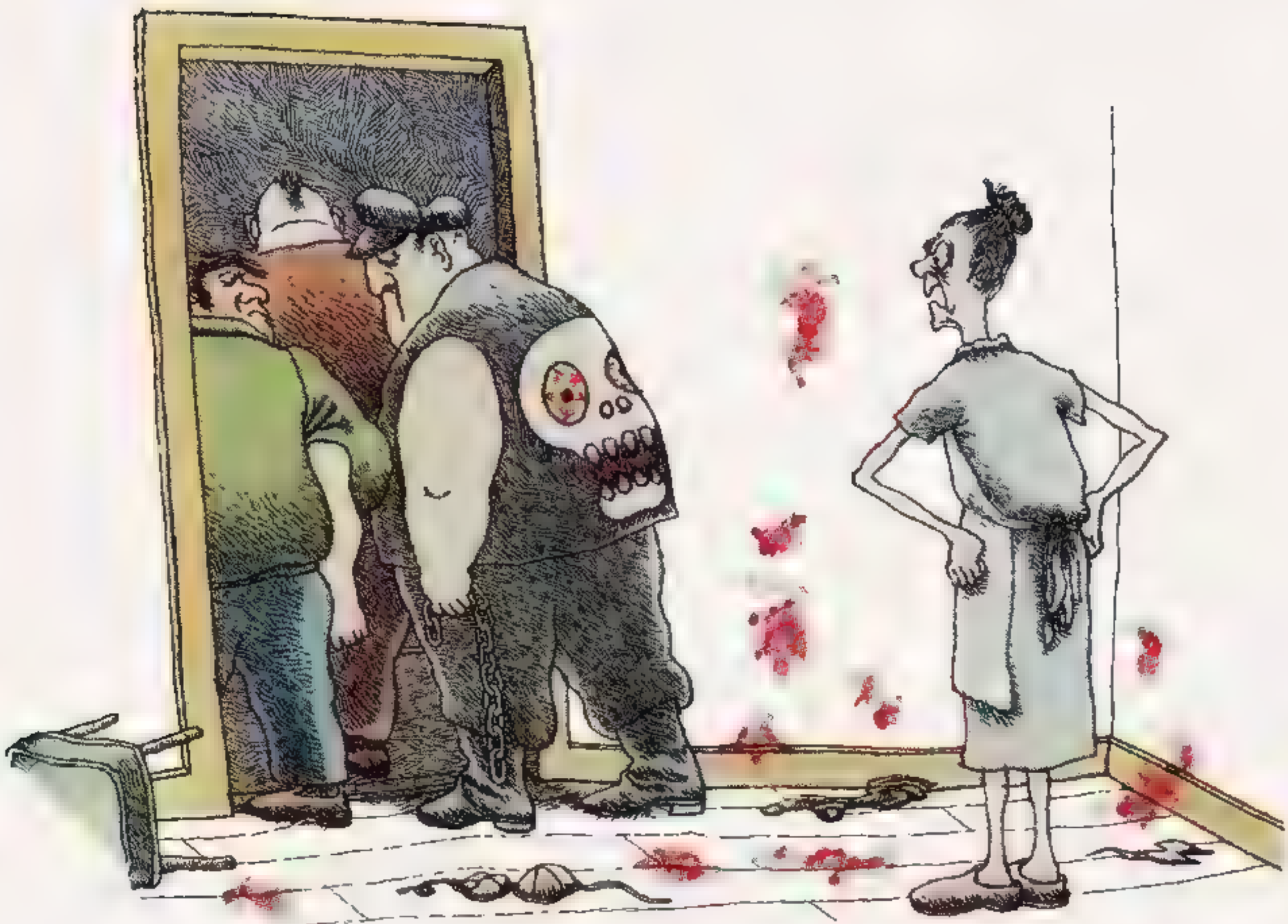
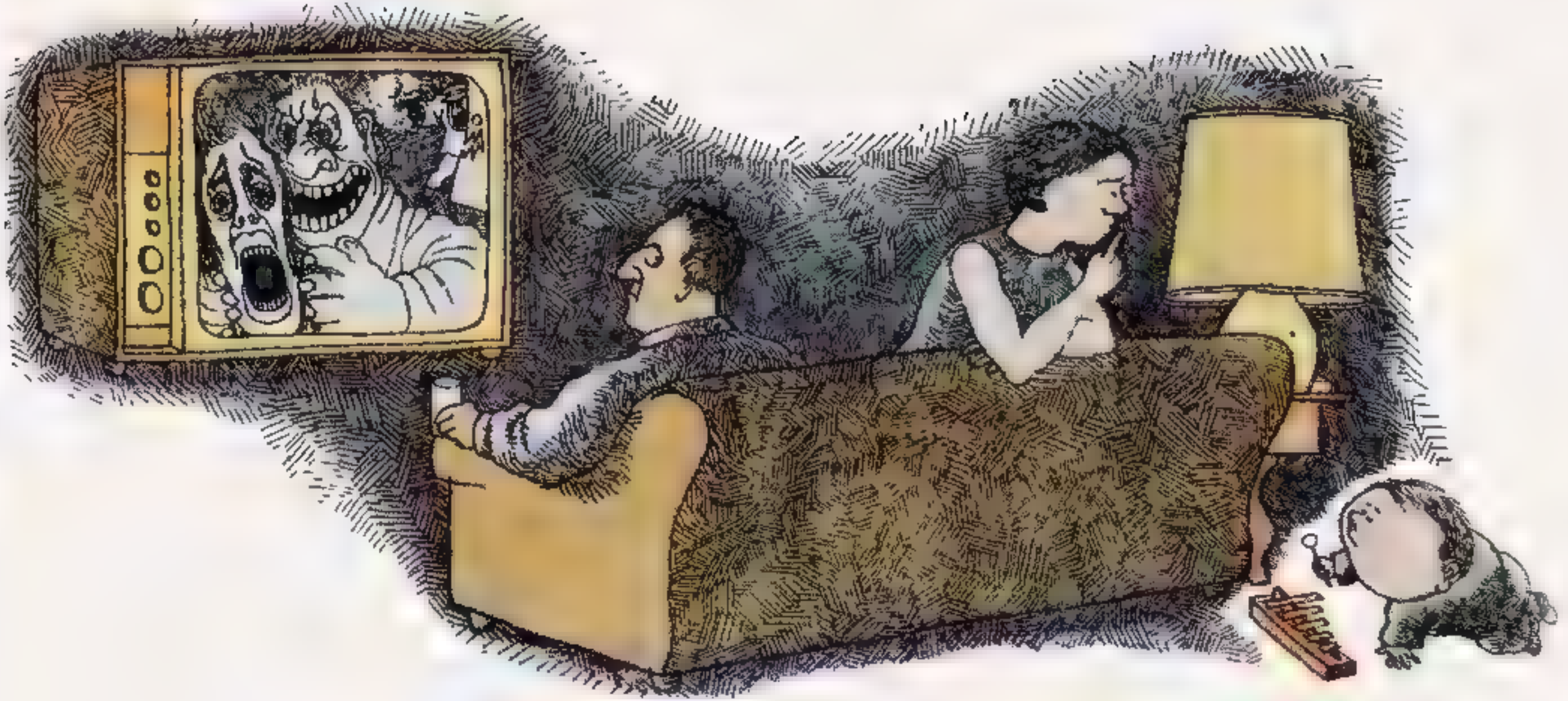
"Boy, that was some great fight!"



*"Look, lady, you hired us to exterminate your cockroaches -
now stand the hell back and let us exterminate them!"*



"Damn it, I've lost count!"



*"How many times have I told you
kids not to play in the living room?"*



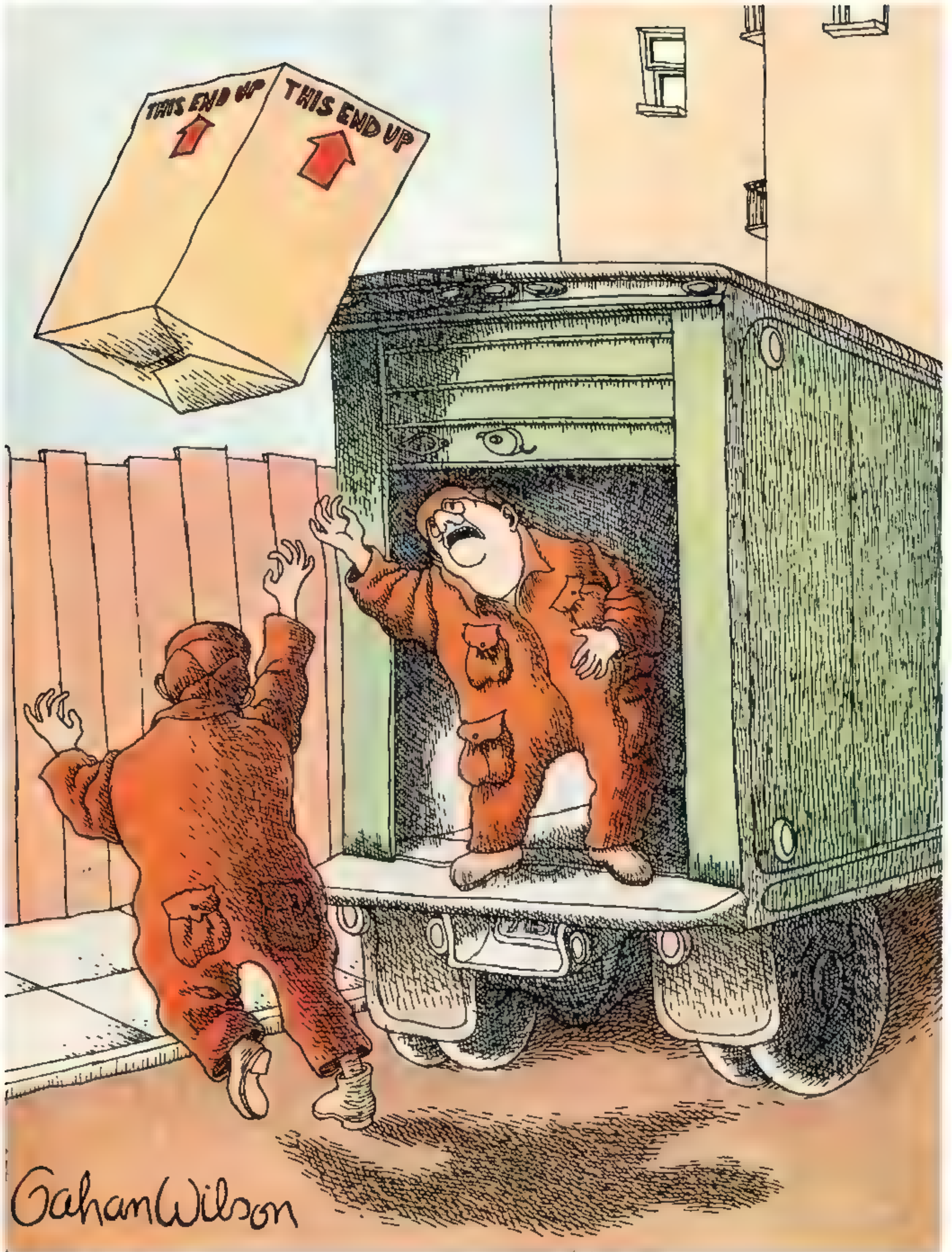
"I think I won!"

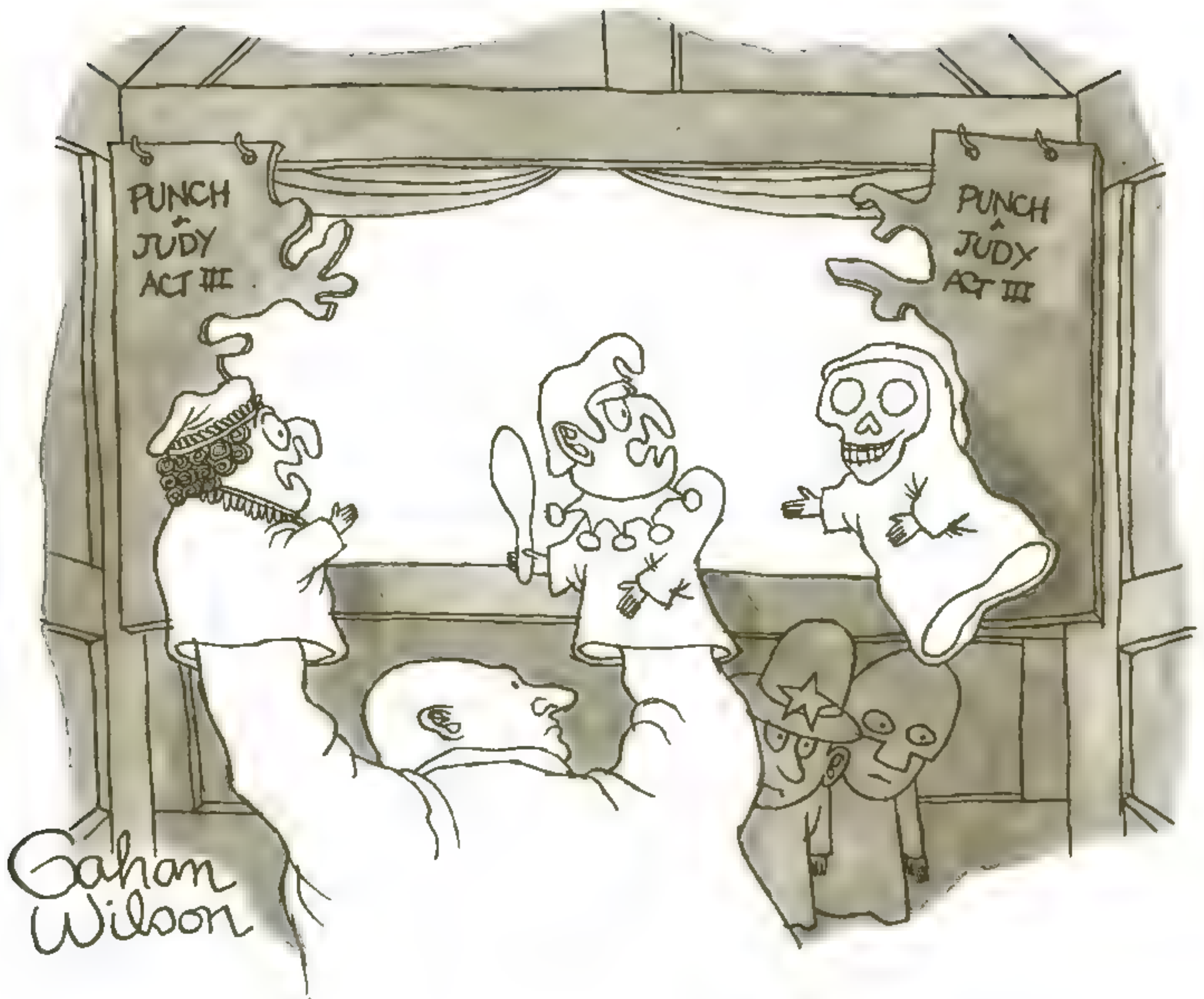


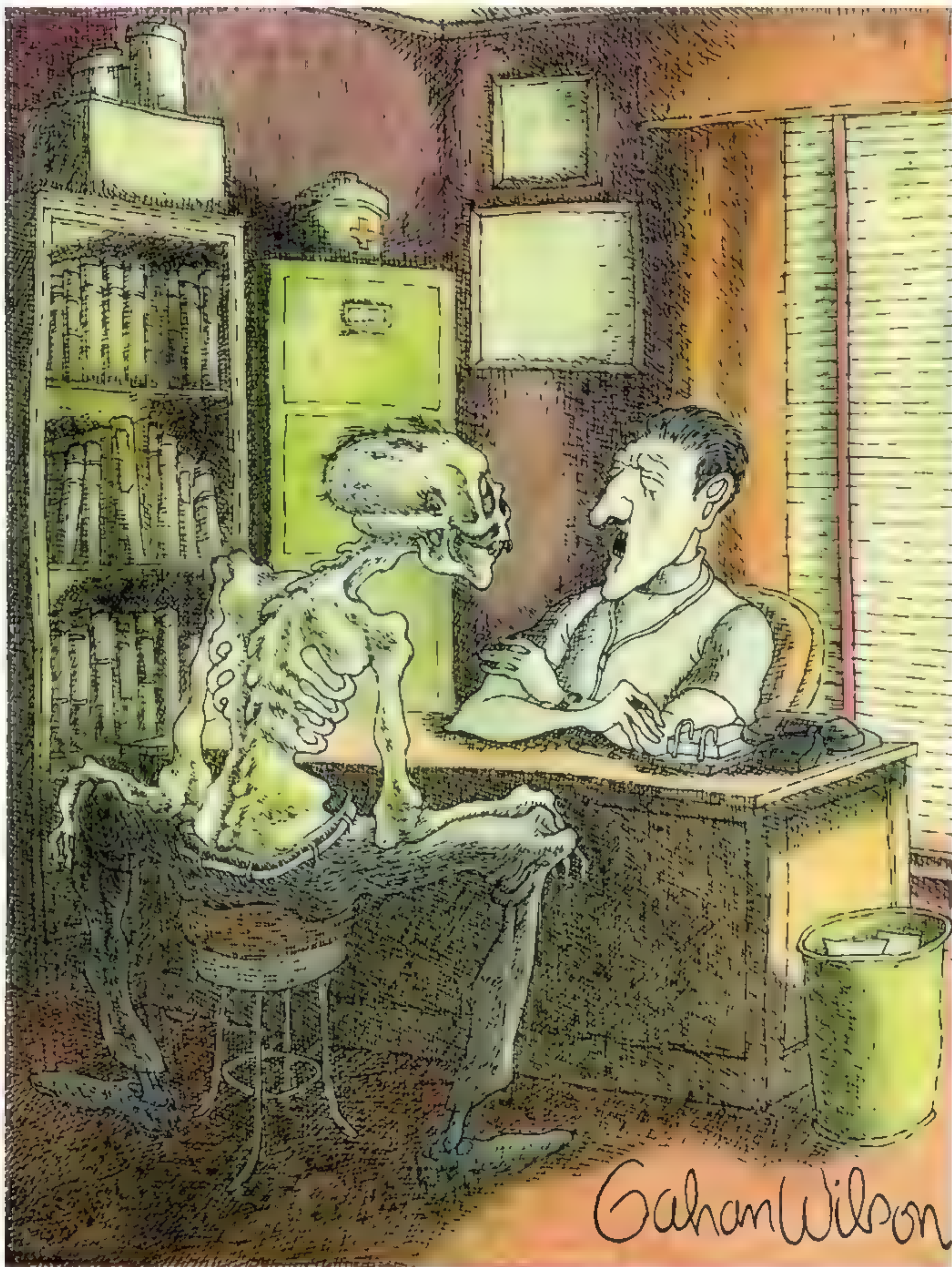
"I think you would be well advised to locate the new delphinium bed elsewhere, Hobbs."



"Phil, I'd like you to meet Brian. Brian will be posing for the picture jacket of your new novel."



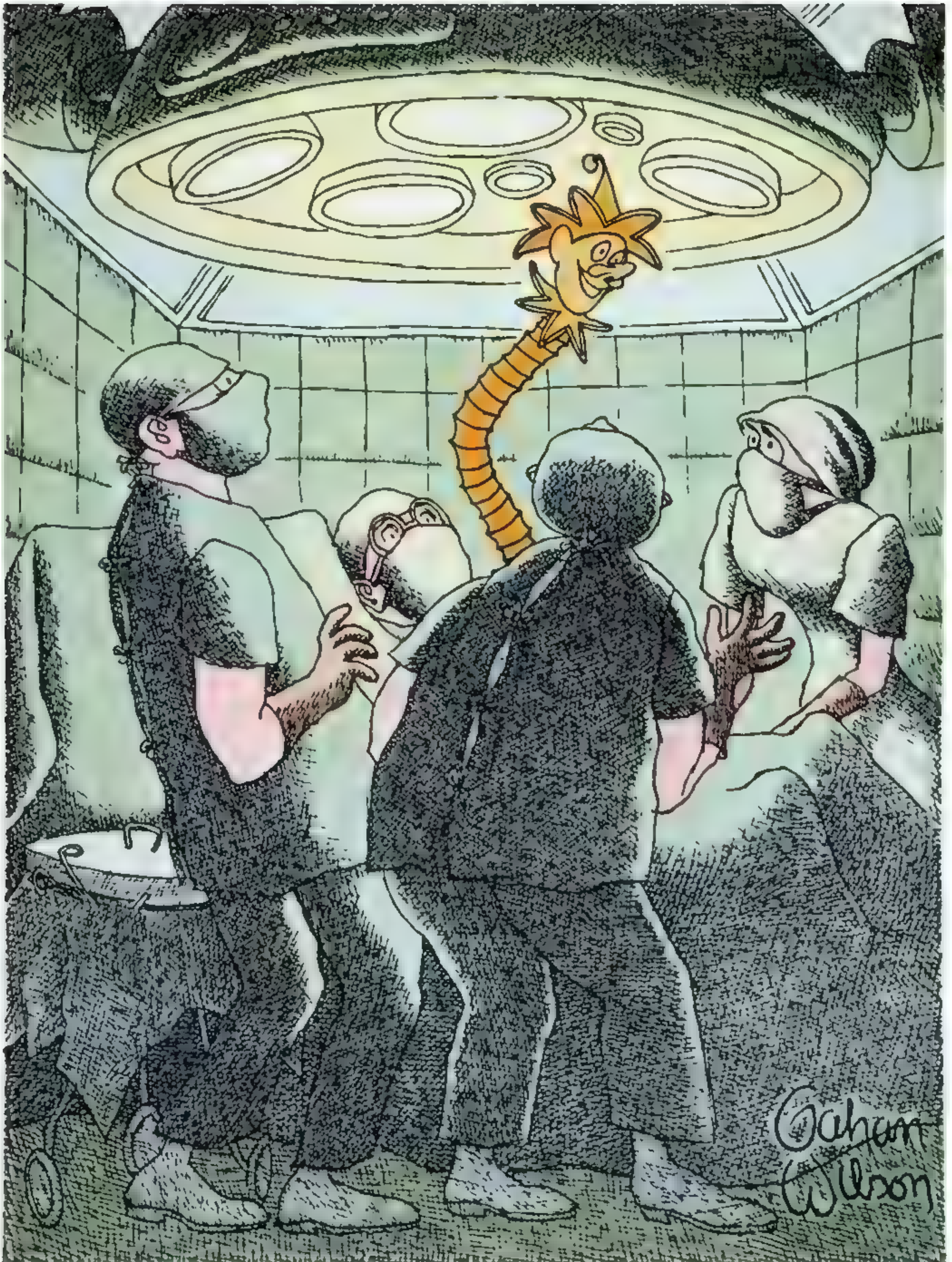


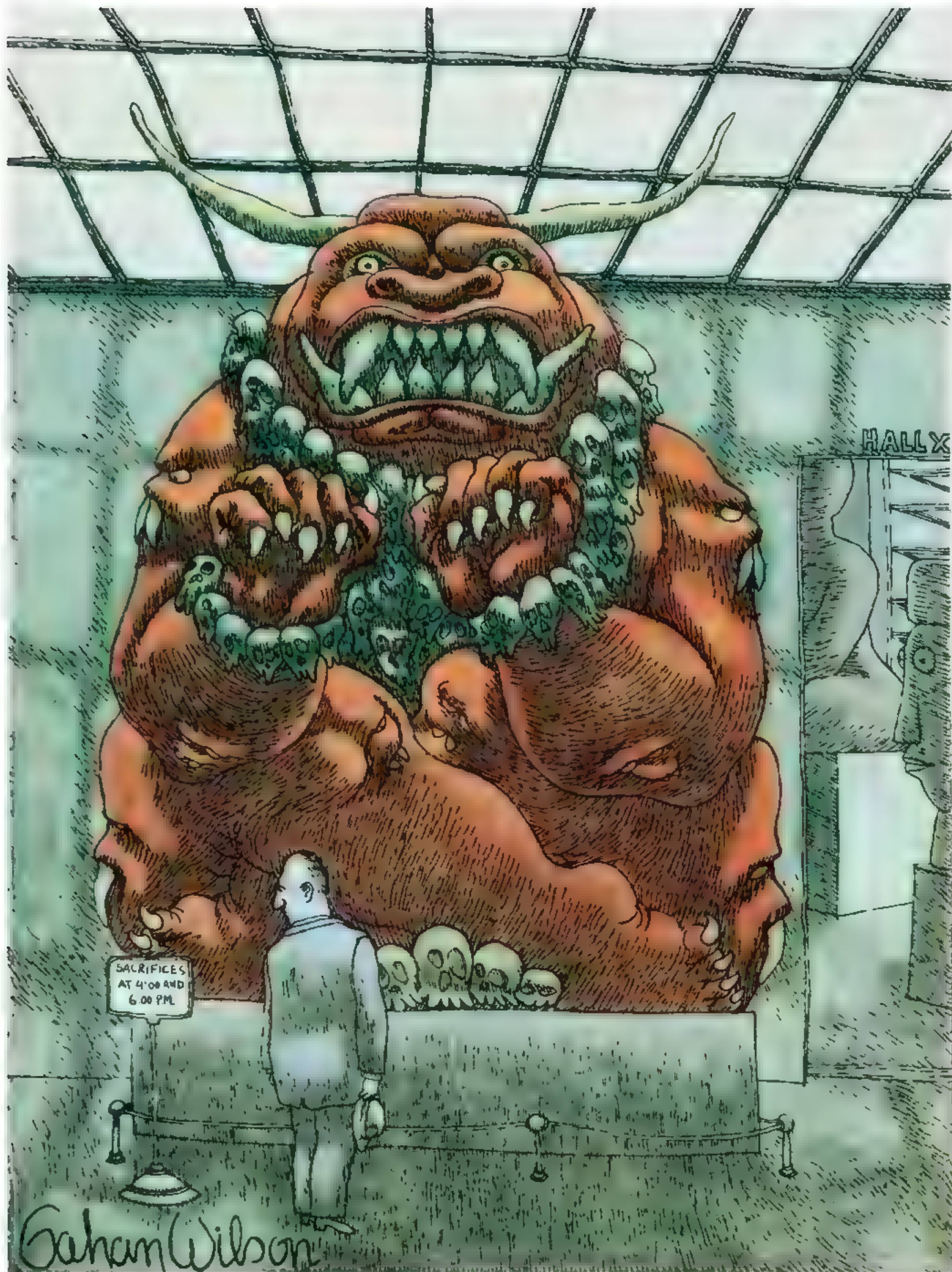


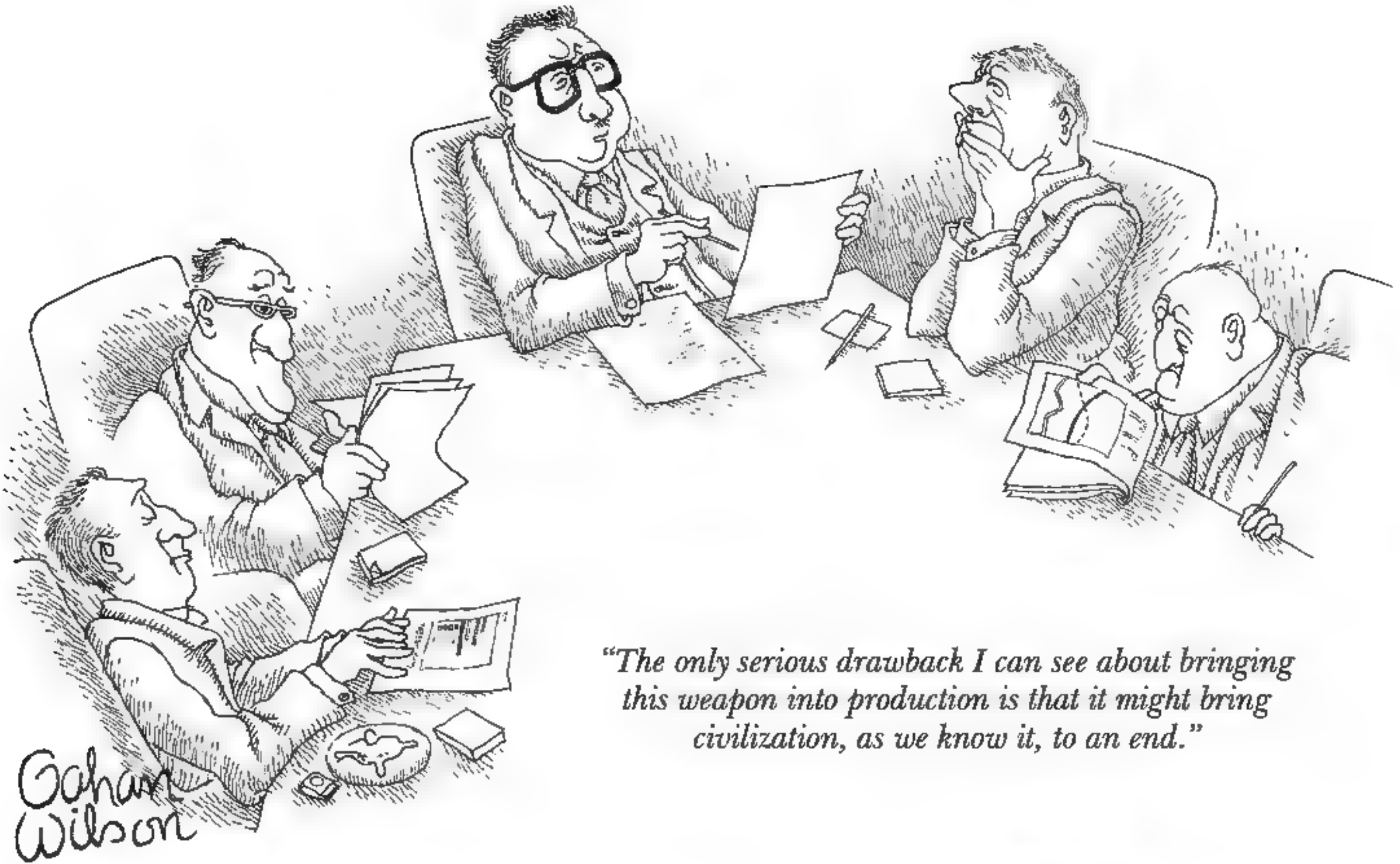
"We may already be too late, Mr. Parker."



*"I'm sure of it, Harry—it's that nice Mr. Bently
we met on the tour!"*



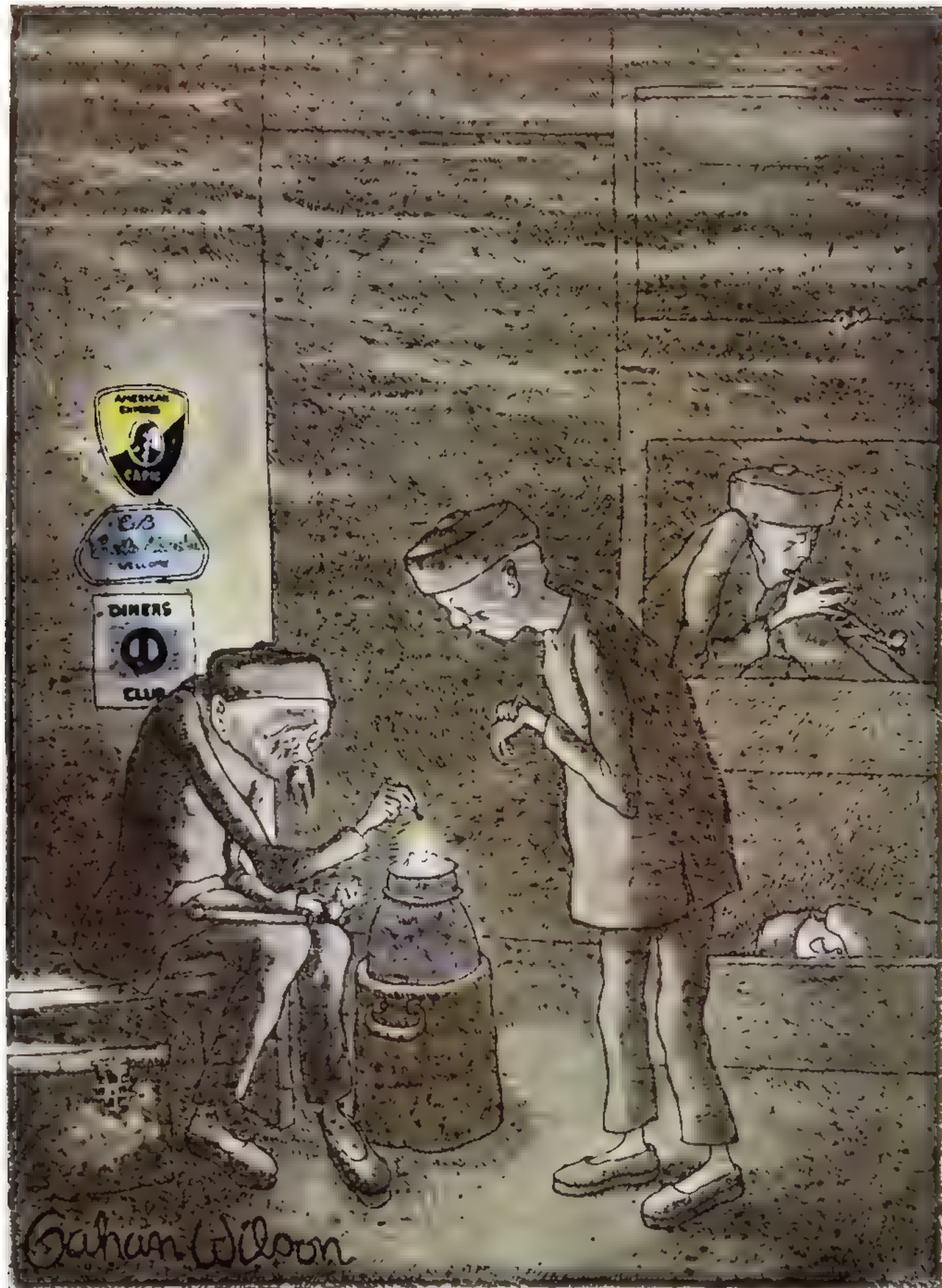




"I'm sorry, young man, I'm afraid you're just wasting your obscene phone call."



"At the tone, the time will be fifty-nine minutes and fifty seconds after seven... At the tone, the time will be eight o'clock, exactly... At the tone, the time will be ten seconds after eight... At the tone...."



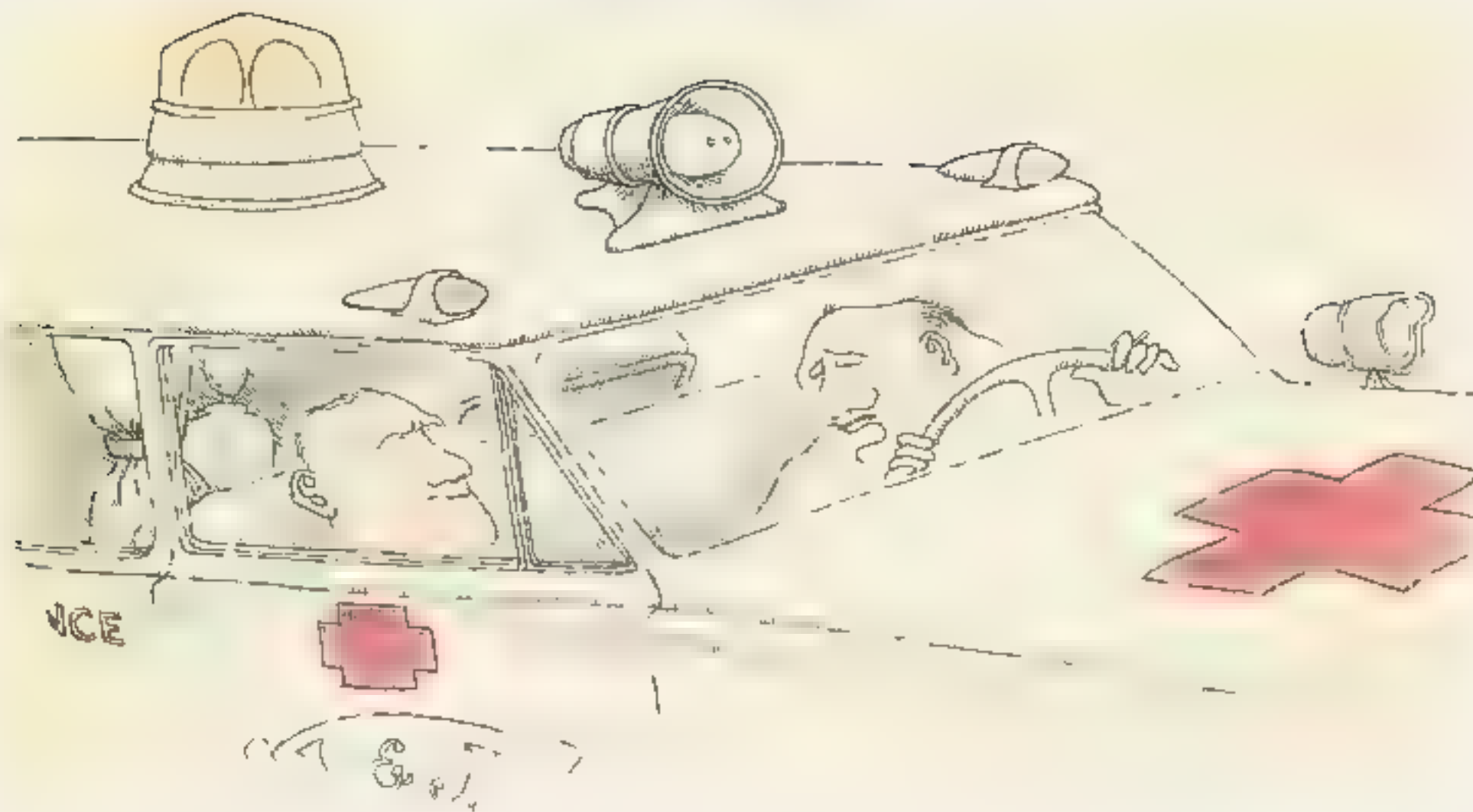
HAVE A HEART: A scalpel-sharp dissection of the innards sanctum, the current surge in transplant surgery.



"Dibs!"



"Most emphatic rejection of foreign tissue I've ever seen!"



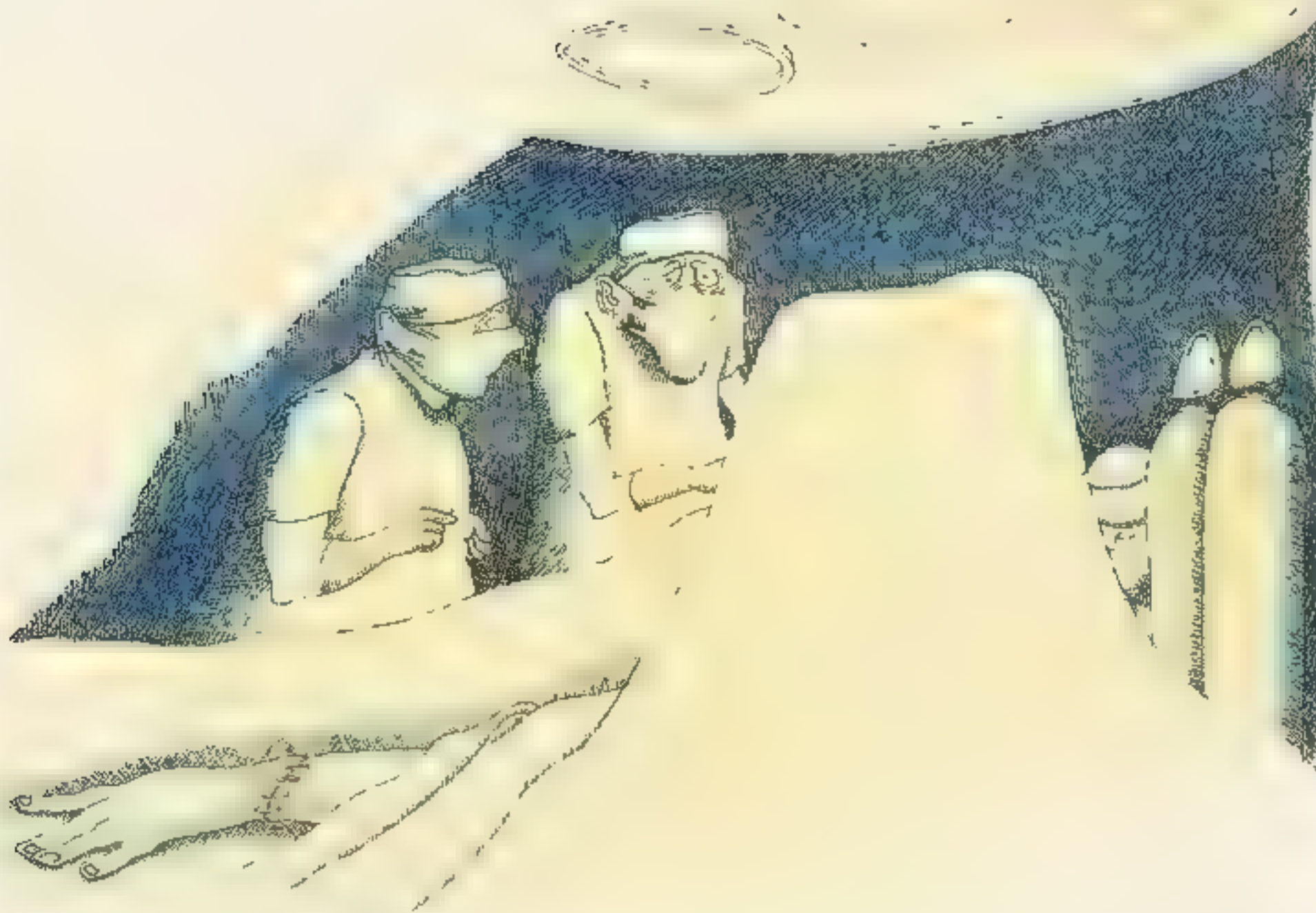
"You got it, now? If they crash between Page Corners and Route Nine, they're Mount Sinai's; if they go off between Route Nine and Baysfort, they belong to Holy Cross; and if they buy it between Baysfort and the throughway, then Hopkins Memorial gets to use them."



"Look, Mr. Parker, I'm only human."



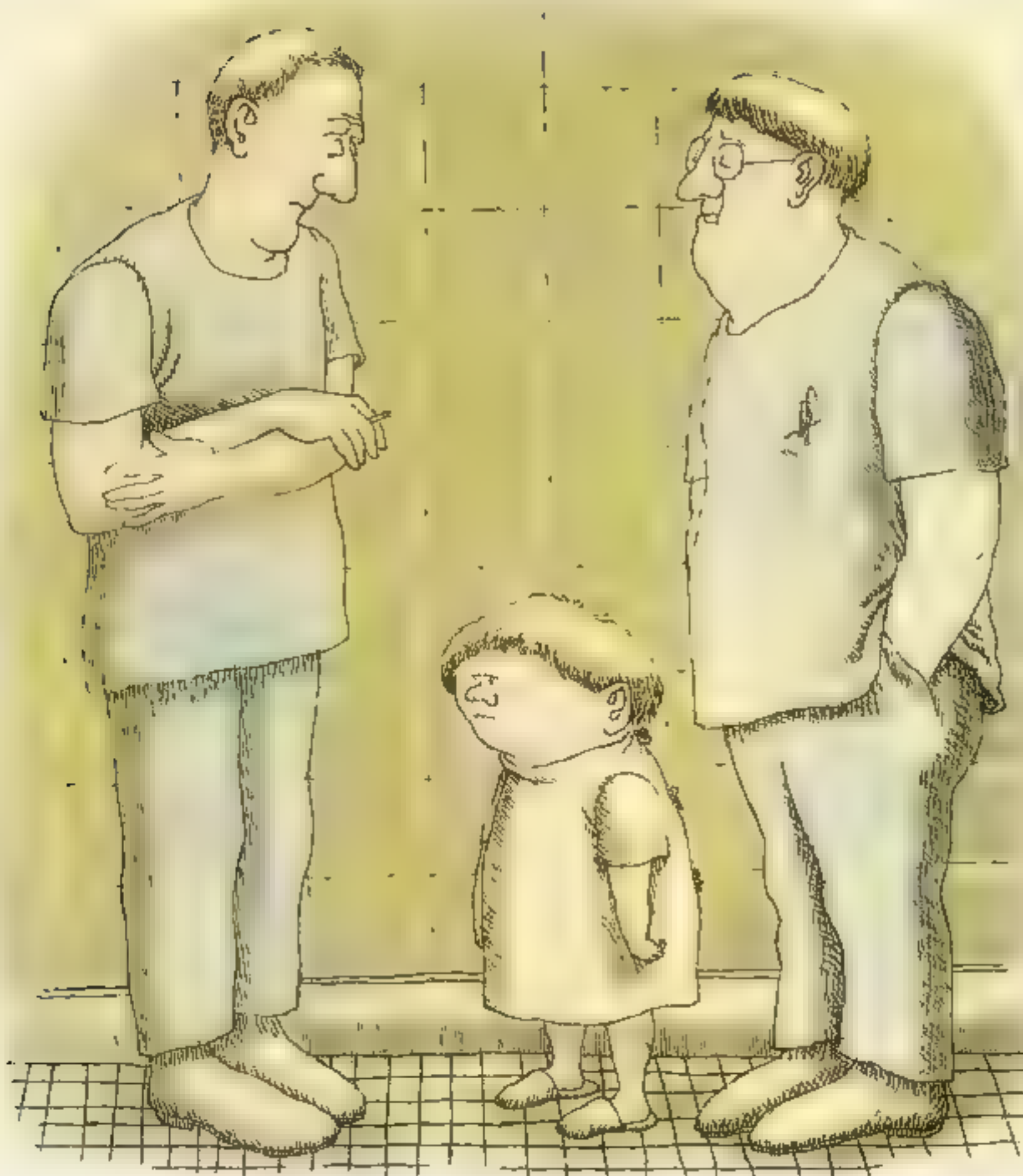
"OK—which one gets the kidney?"



*"Sometimes I miss how it was in the old days...the hidden laboratory
in the ancient castle...the graveyard raids...the angry crowds of
peasants bearing torches...."*



"By George, I do believe you're right—there's nothing of the original Mr. Russell left!"



"He says he's willing to donate his tonsils."



"Mr. Borden is only in for an appendectomy, doctor."



"Start the press conference."

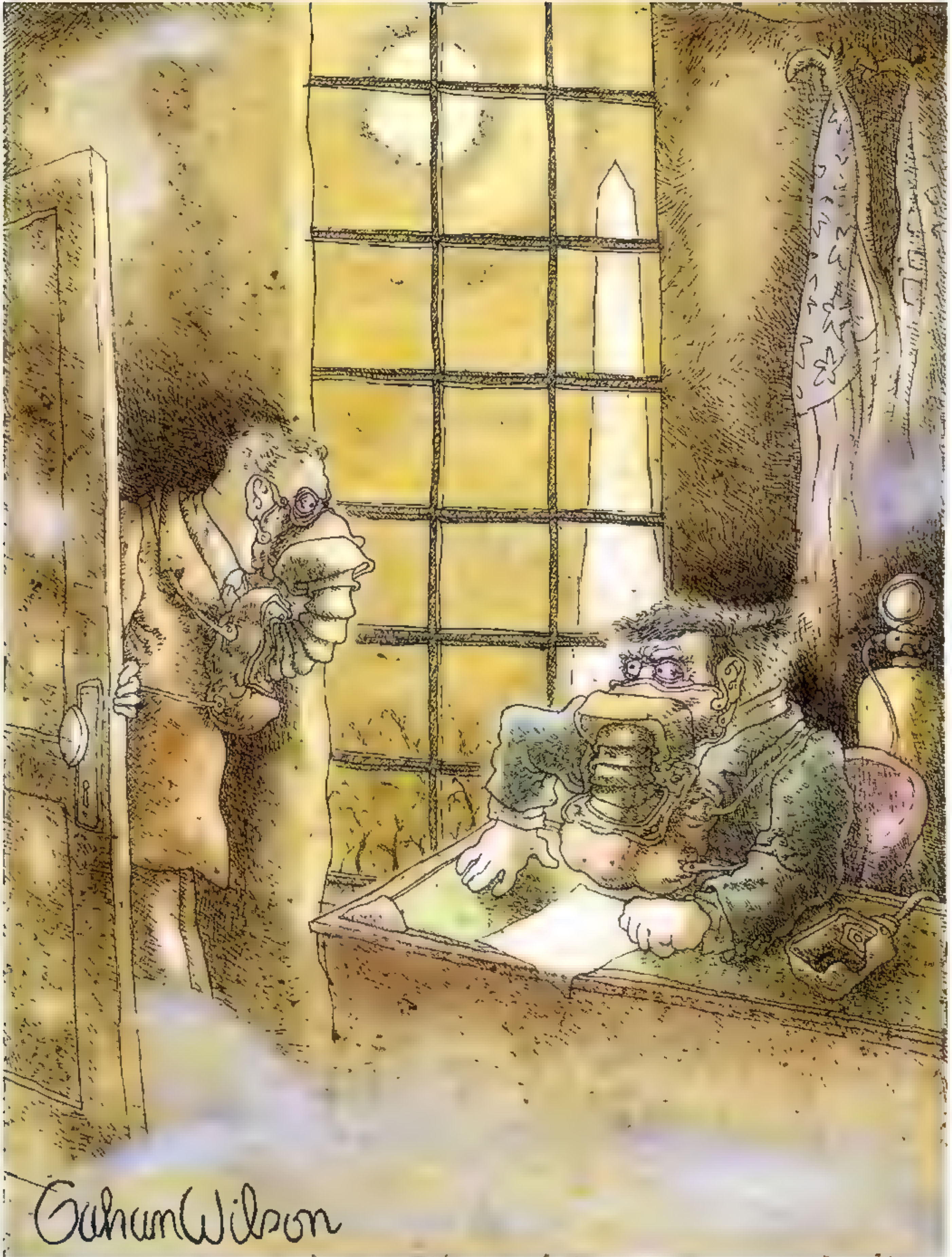


"It all worked out just as you said it would, Mother!"





"We're not going to get anywhere with this guy until sunrise."



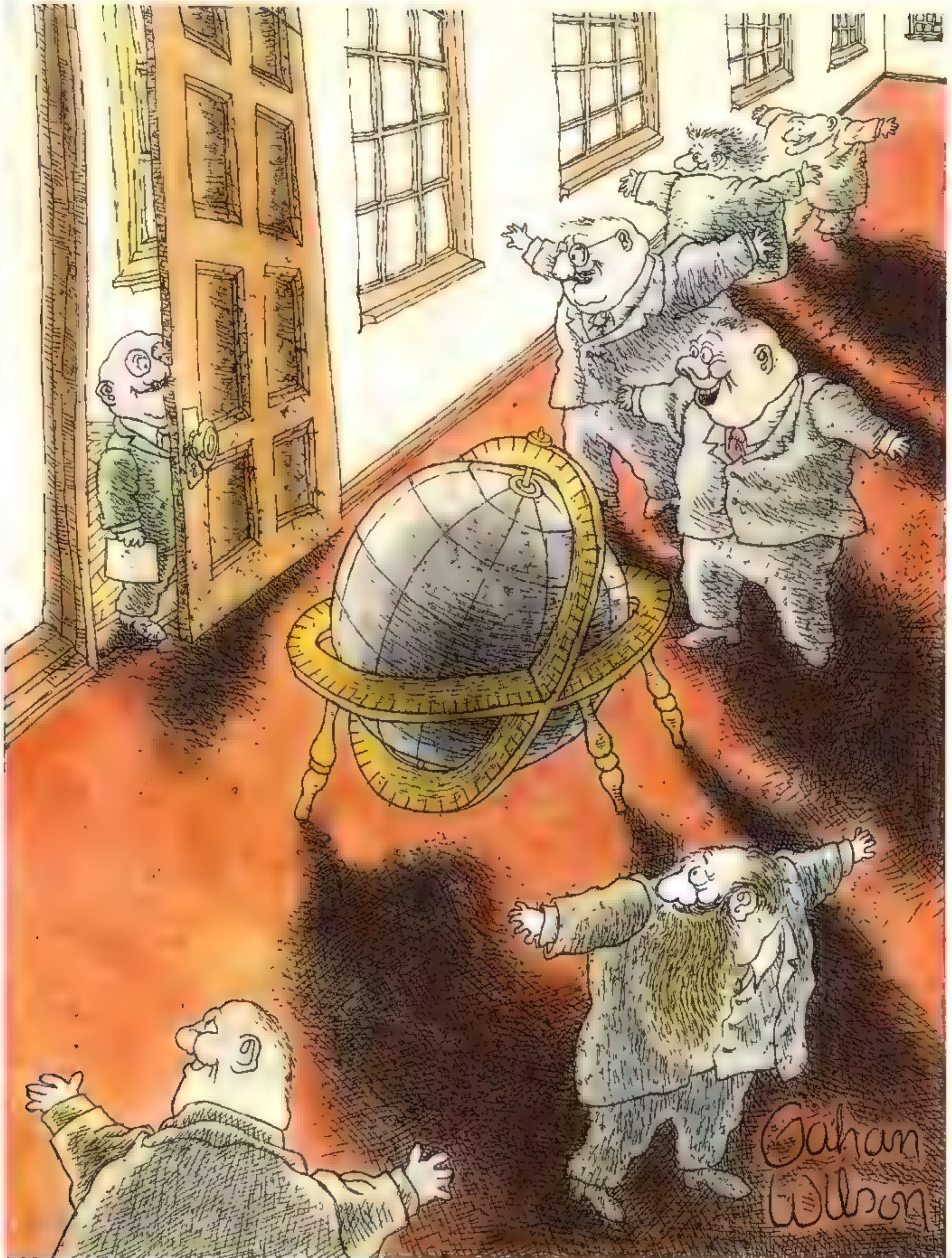
"I'm sorry, Senator, it's some more of those crackpot conservationists."



*"Your mother and I think he's very nice, dear,
but isn't he just a little bit old?"*



"I thought he seemed depressed!"



"Professor Zlata! You're just in time to be the planet Neptune!"



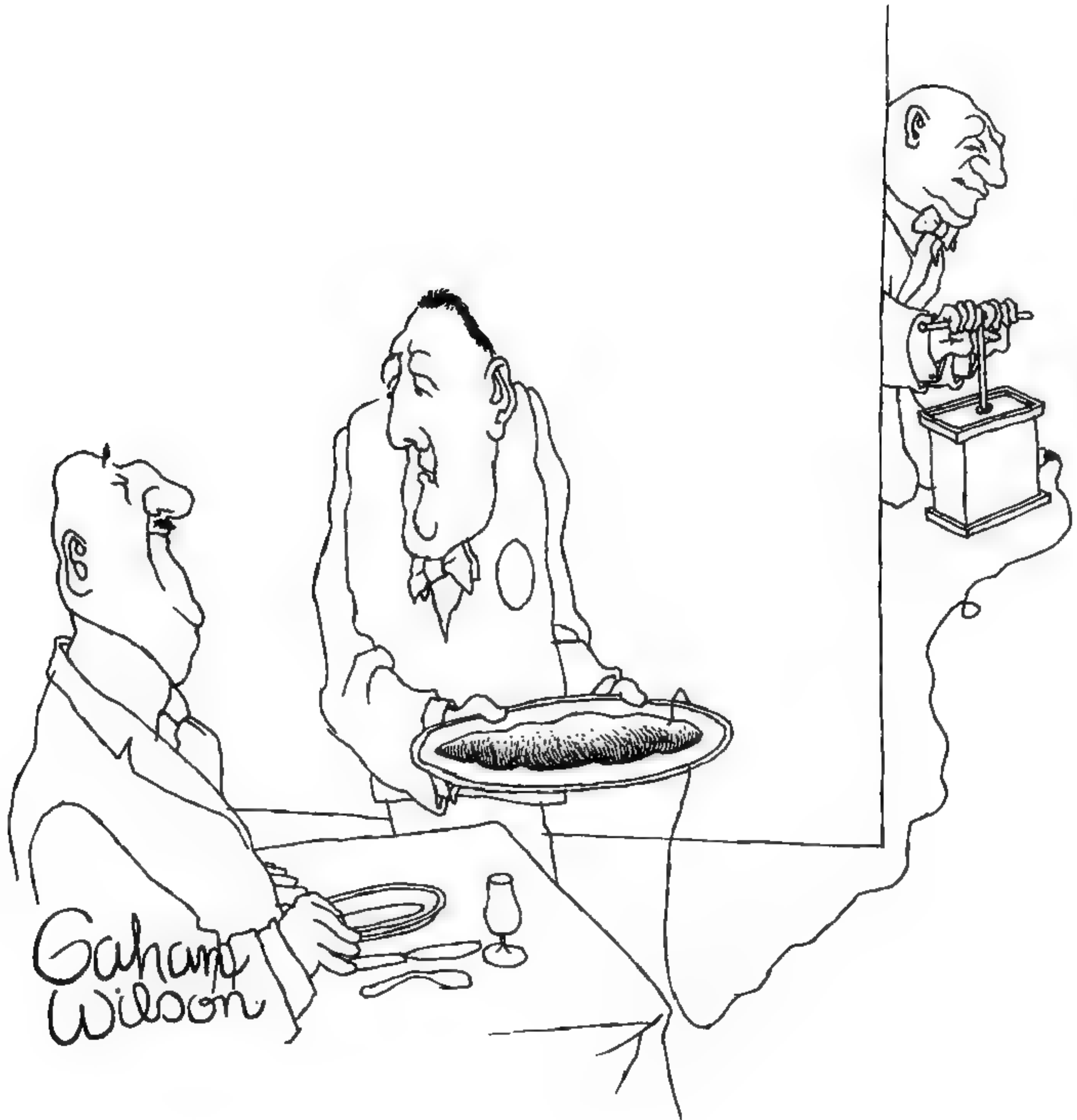
Graham Wilson

*"My God—I've forgotten the number of
my Swiss bank account!"*

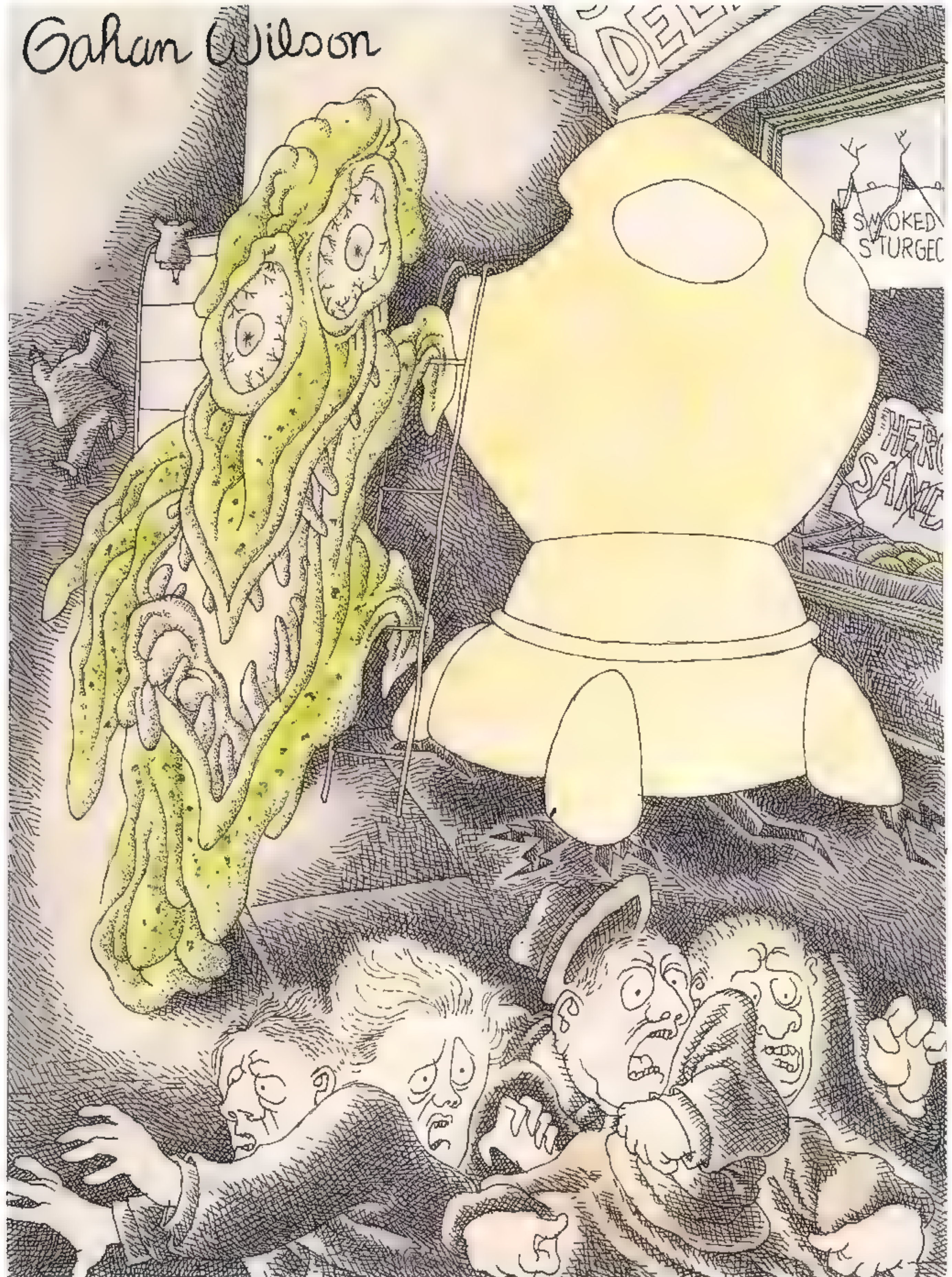


Graham Wilson

"Send over some more birdseed—and hurry!"



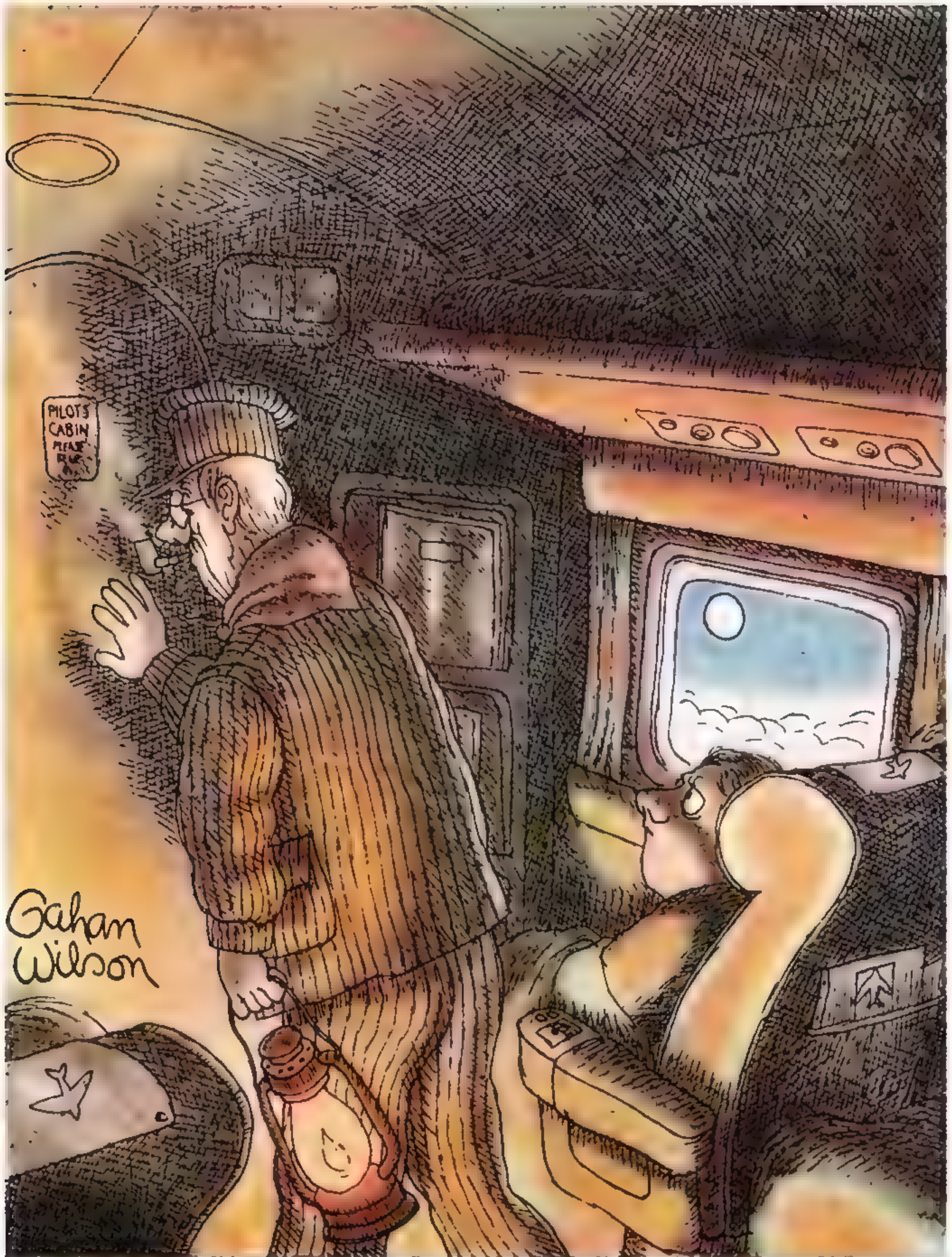
"Your tomato surprise, sir."



"One small step for a znargh—a giant stride for znarghkind!"



"Who hired this clown?"

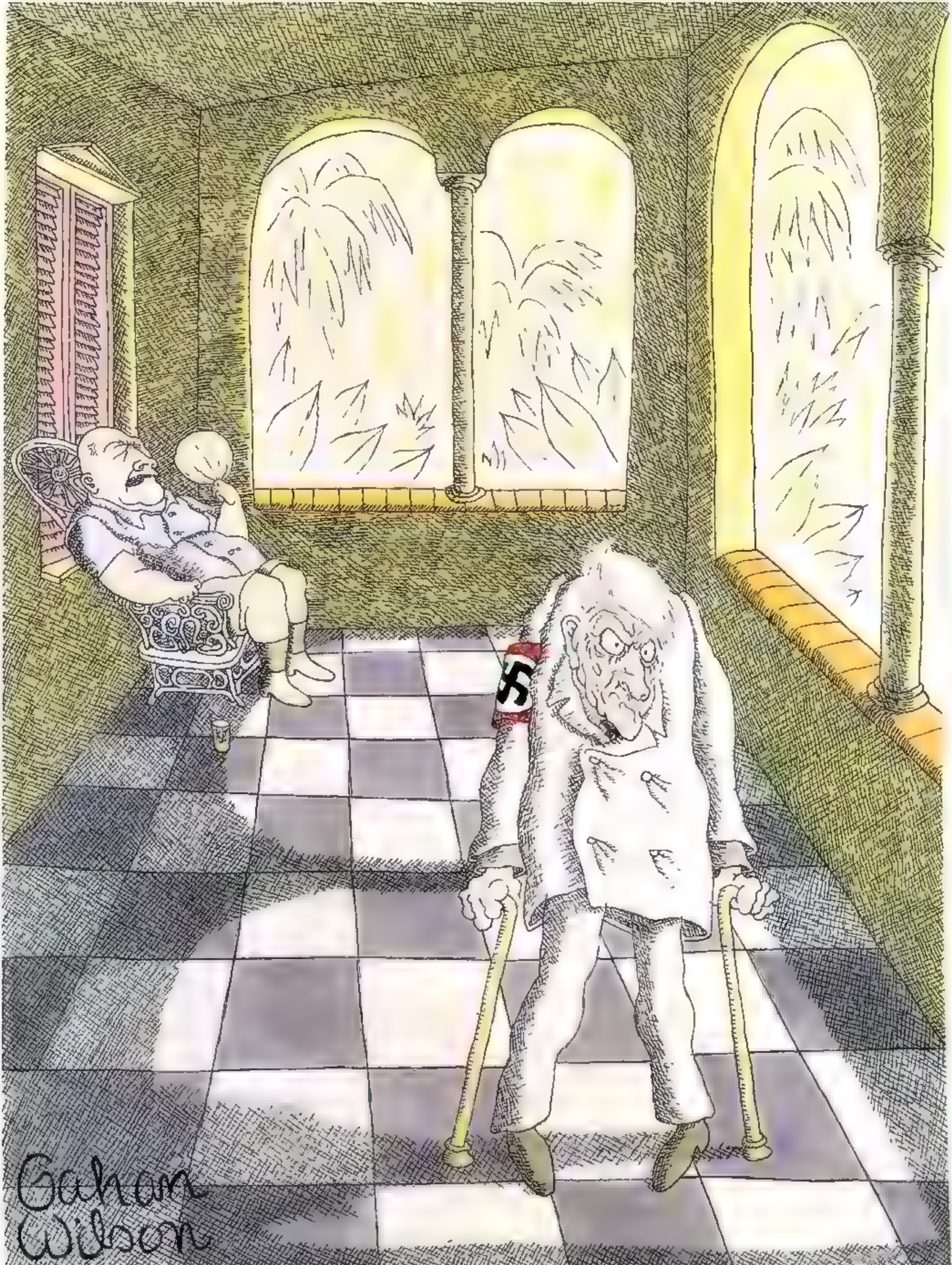




"Wait a minute...that's not me!"



"Beastly sorry about all these interruptions."



*"Oh, stop bitching about it, will you? It's all
been over and done with for years!"*



"Uh—Carstairs—I've found something that may come as quite a surprise to the foundation!"



*"My goodness, Mr. Merryweather, we certainly did make
a boo-boo with that prescription of yours!"*



Graham Wilson



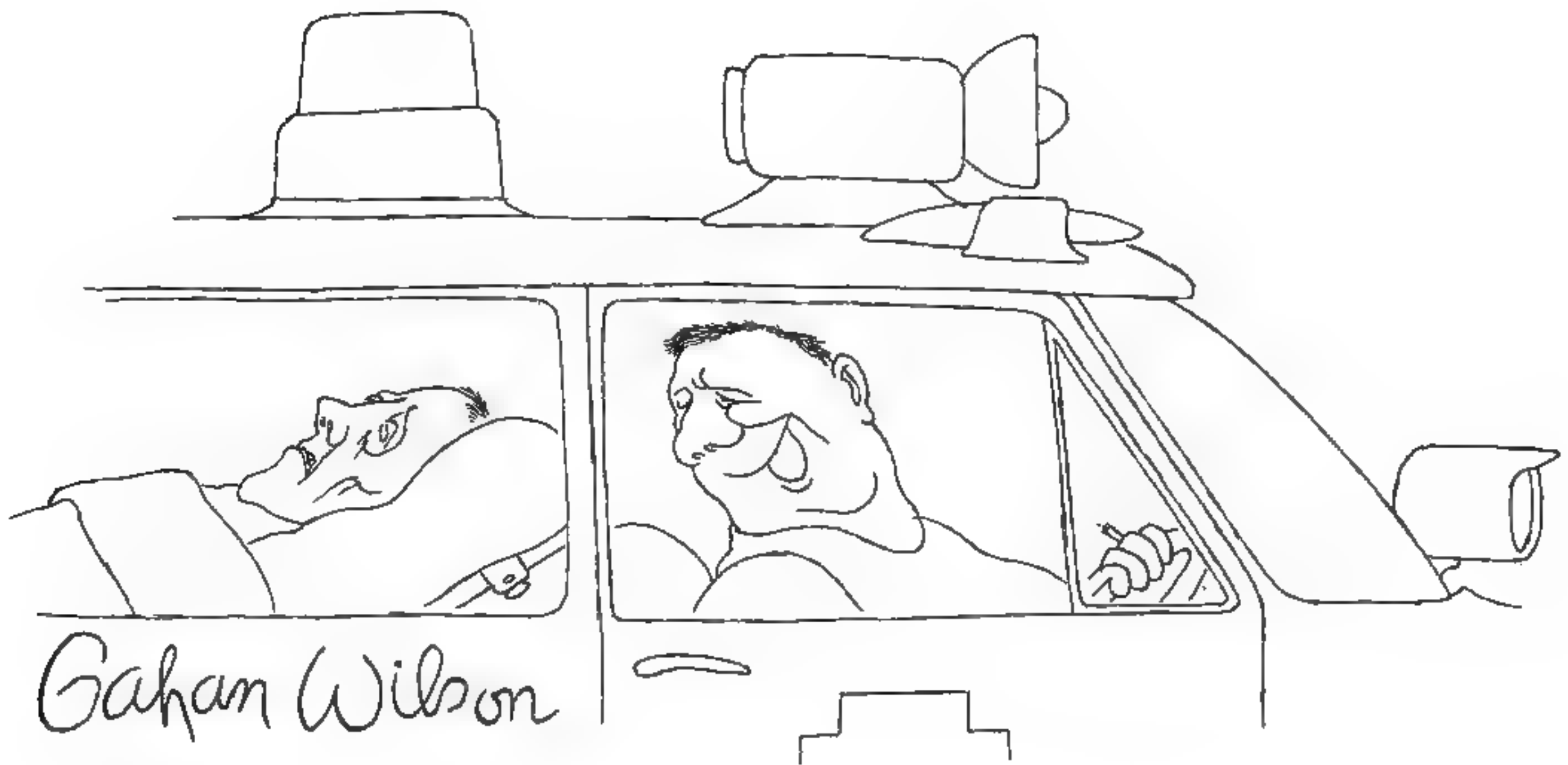
*"Then, after you've starved the villagers into submission,
you can bring in your interrogation team...."*





Gahan
Wilson

"Kill!"



"Like to see what this baby can do?"



*"General Electric beat him out of his death ray
and he's simply furious!"*



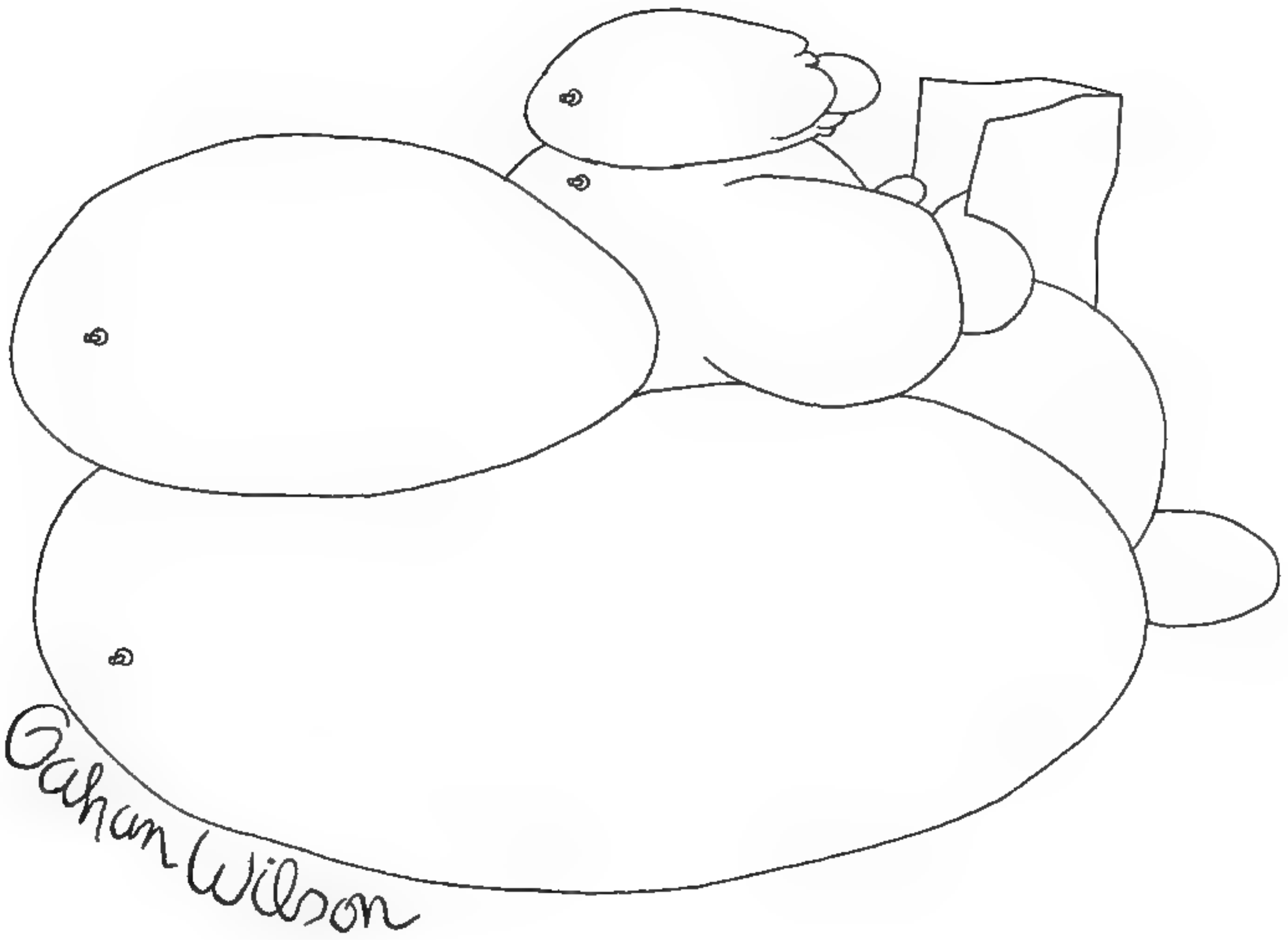
"Congratulations, Baer—I think you've wiped out the species!"

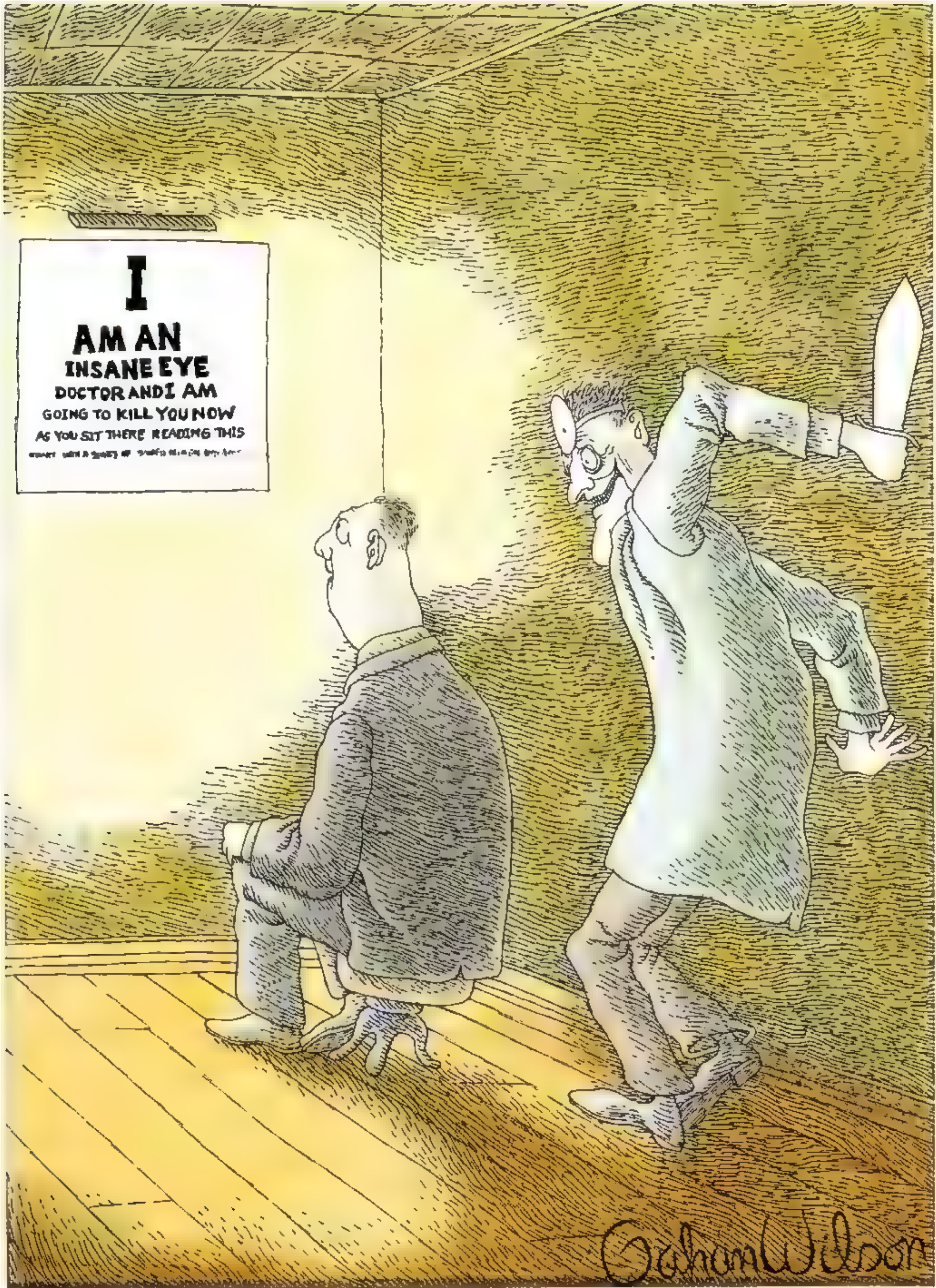


"Take it from me, madam—the passing years can only add to the value of this Spiro T. Agnew standing hall clock."



*"I understand at one time the Earth
wasn't at all like the Moon."*







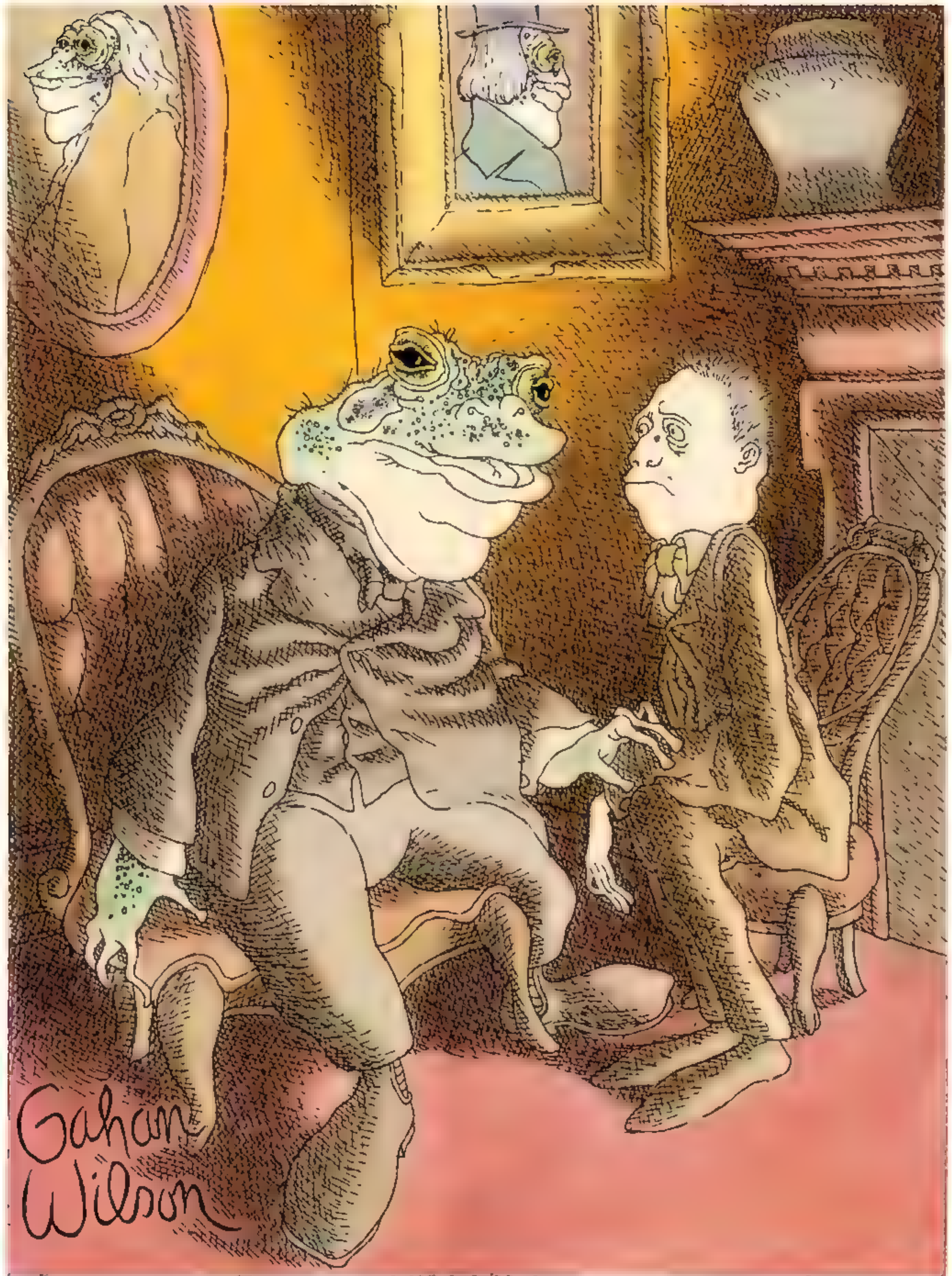
"IS NOTHING
SACRED?"

AD





*"You've really been with us quite a while,
haven't you, Hepburn?"*



*"Now that you've come of age, son, I think it's time your
old dad let you in on our little family curse."*



"You don't have any silly thing about snakes, do you?"



"Come on, Boffo, it's time to get into your costume!"



*"Fred, I think you're spending altogether too much time
down here with these mushrooms!"*



*"It's a good thing Effie likes these little funerals,
she's had such awful luck with her pets."*



Gahan Wilson

*"He owed me a month's wages when he died
and he's going to work it out."*



"Sir! The Moorne Castle Monster is under the strict protection of the National Historic Trust!"

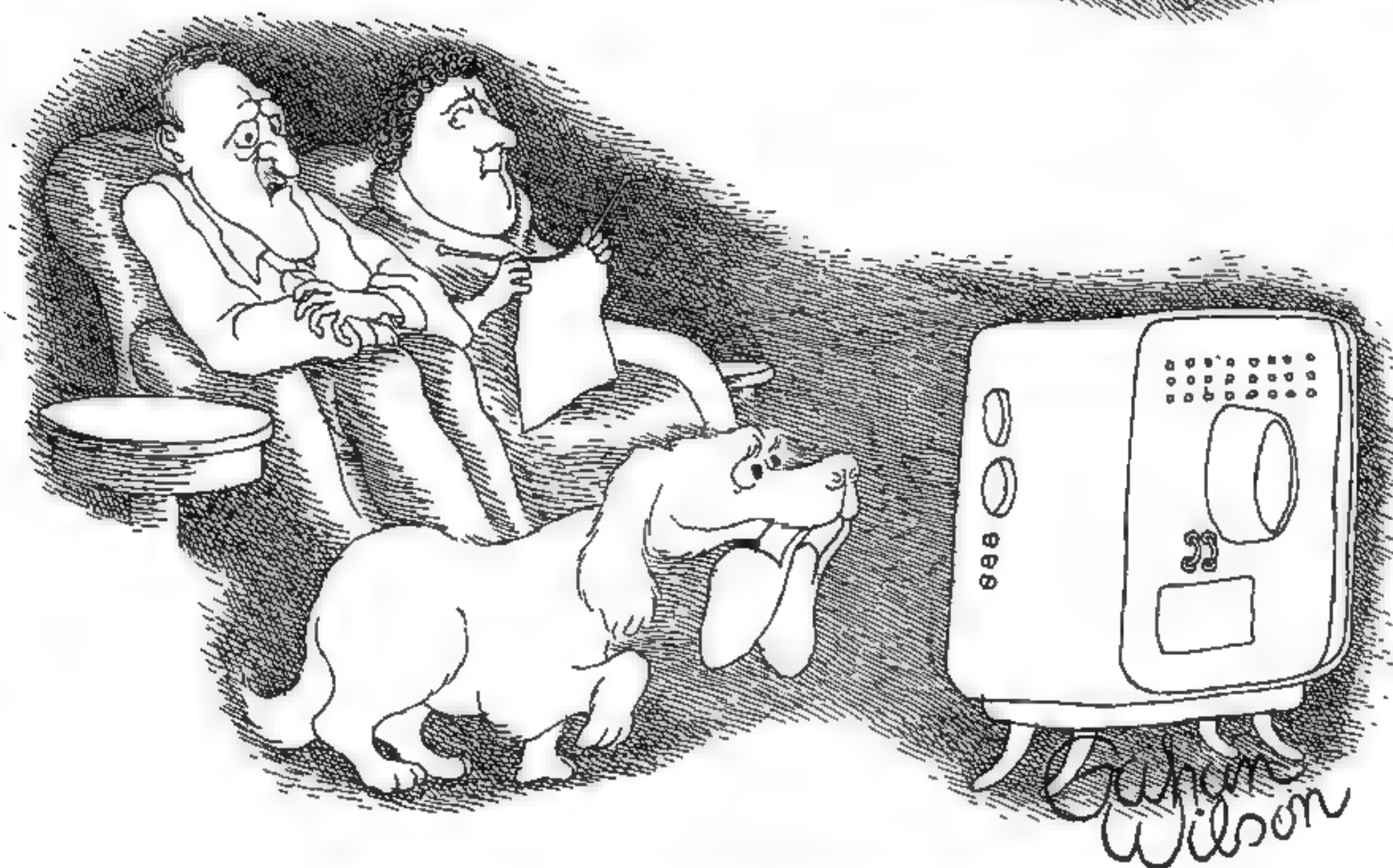


"...Talk about stubborn!"

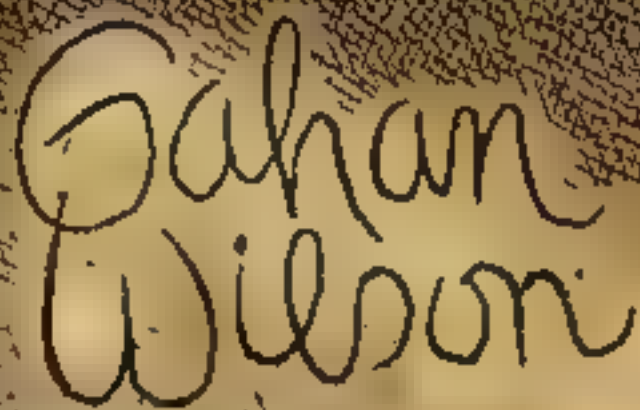


"...is pleased to announce a complete and devastating victory over the enemy. This is a recorded message. The Government is pleased...."

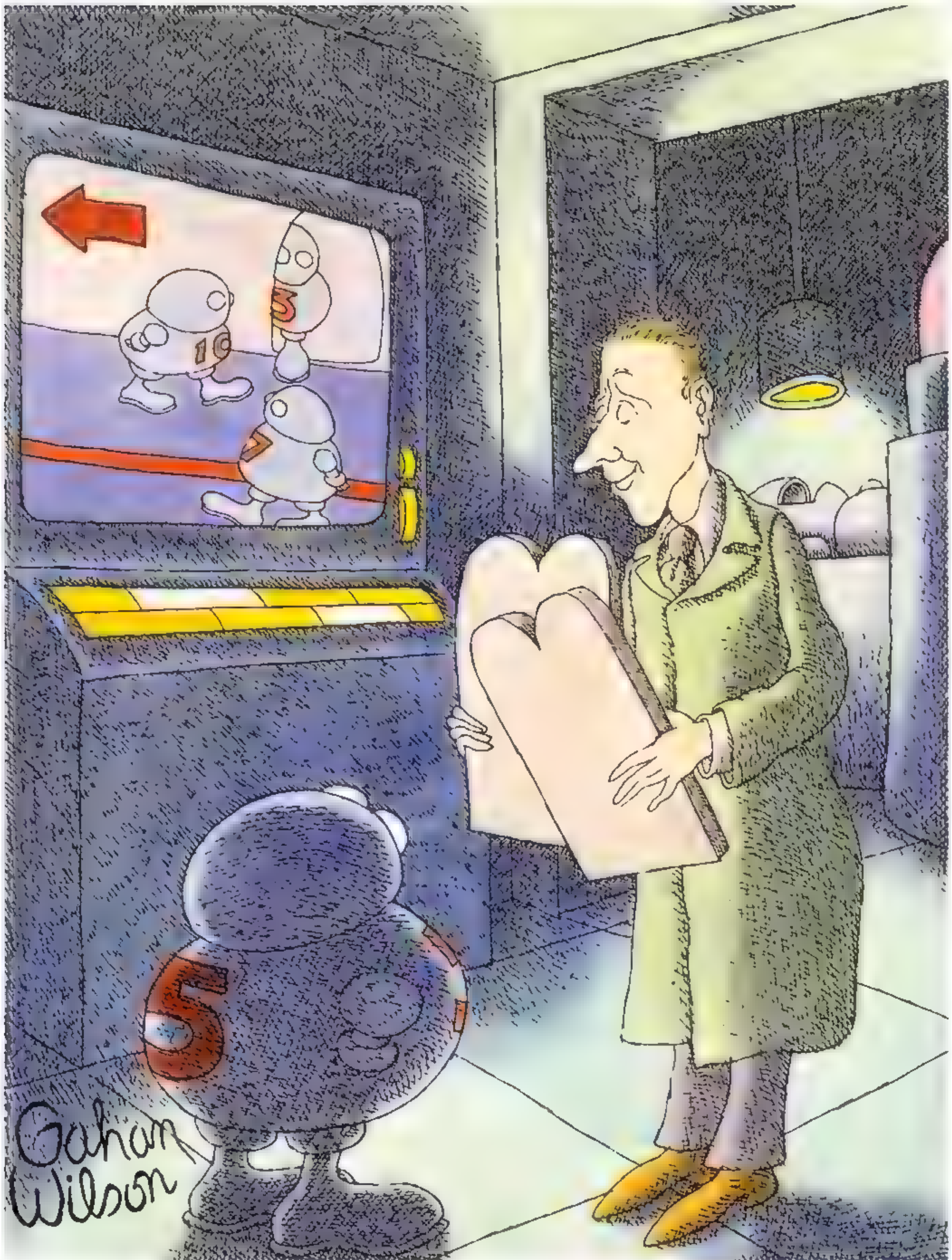
*"I don't know, man—sometimes I feel
you're wrong for the movement!"*



"Let's face it—he likes Walter Cronkite better than me...."



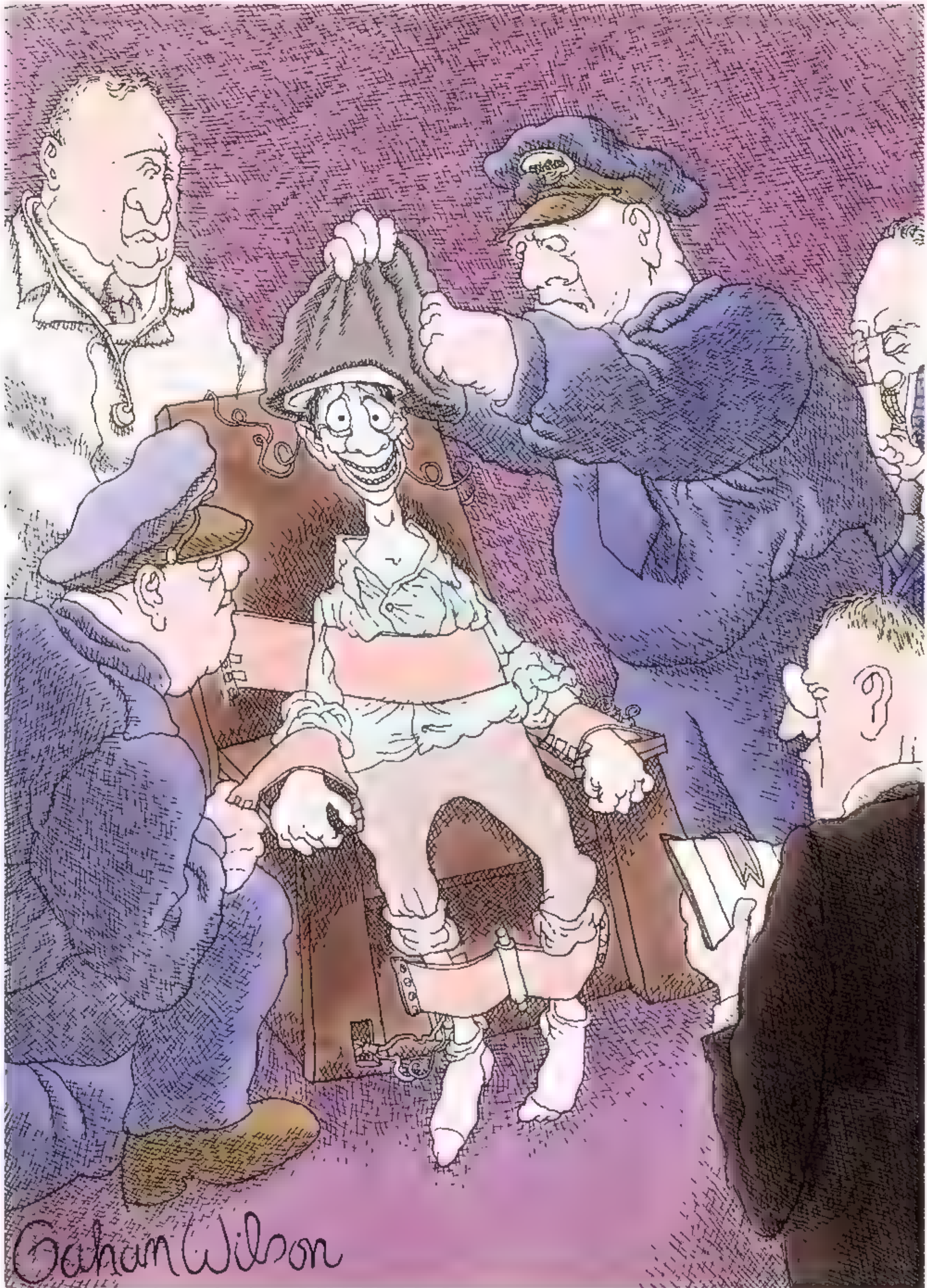
"Oh, yes—do come in!"



"I thought you and the other robots might find these useful."



"Excuse me for shouting—I thought you were farther away."



"Gee—it's just like in the movies!"



"How did you come to name your boat the Revenge, Captain?"



"You funnin' me, bub?"



"Same gosh-darn thing every full moon, eh, Mr. Harper?"



"Uh, I think you'd better turn on the car radio, Martha...."



"Of course, in life he was allergic to them."

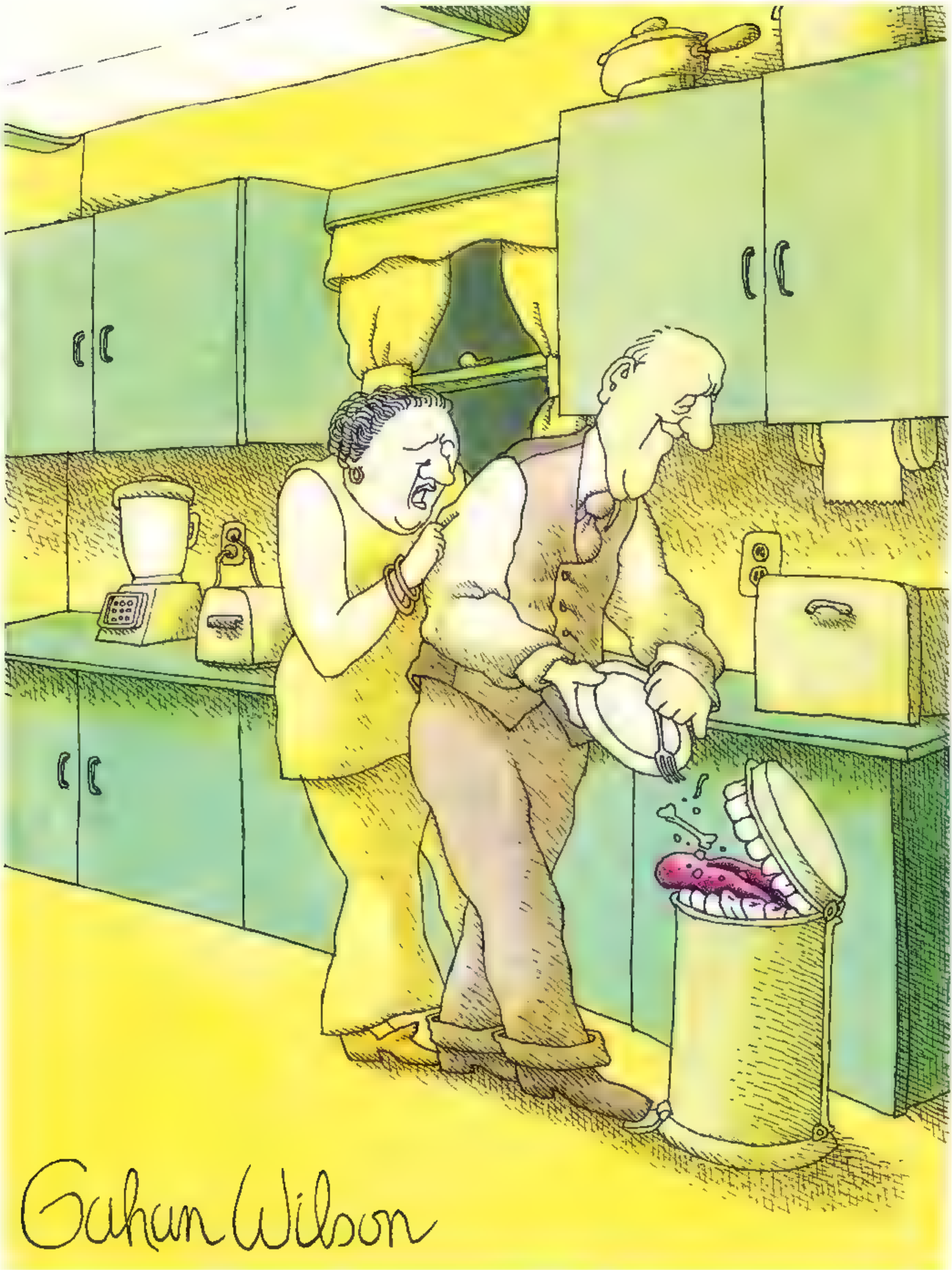


"I knew this would happen if those damned conservationists had their way!"



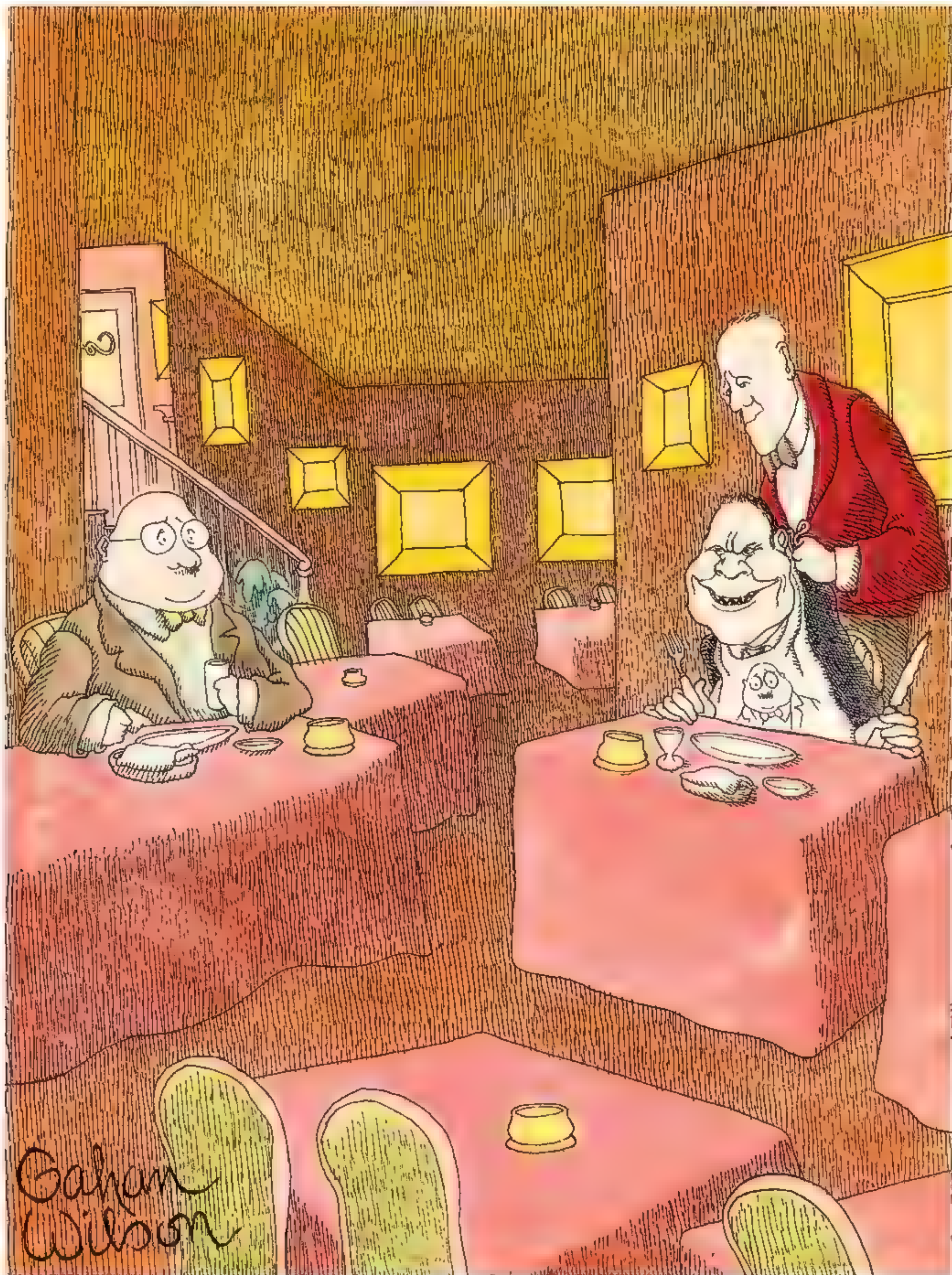
Gahan
Wilson

"I take it, Senator, you approve of the present seniority system."



Graham Wilson

"Oh, Irwin, I wish to God you'd get rid of that thing!"





"And to those of you who did contribute to the church fund—our blessings."



"How do you like our Wednesday-night get-togethers?"

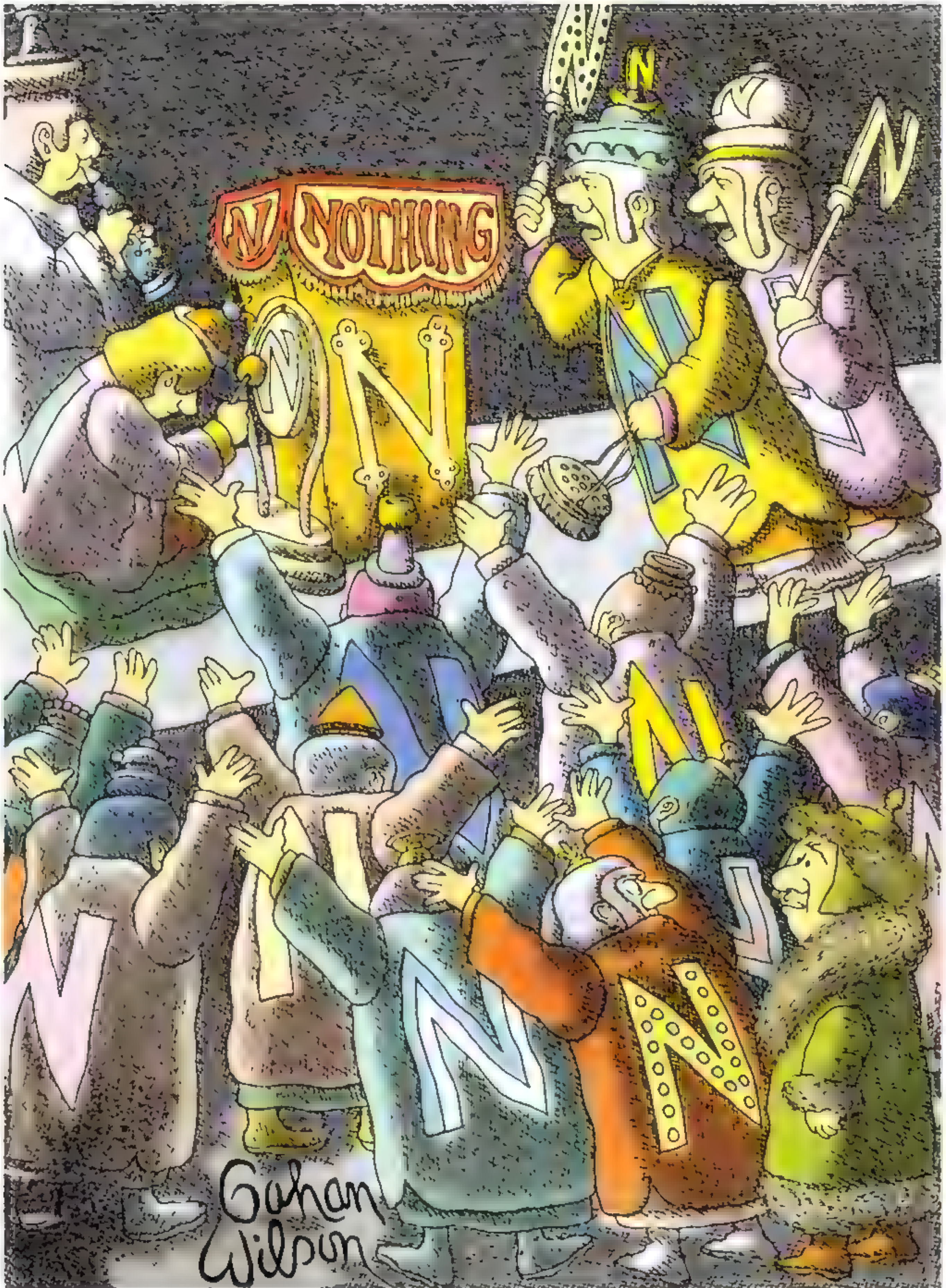


Gahan Wilson

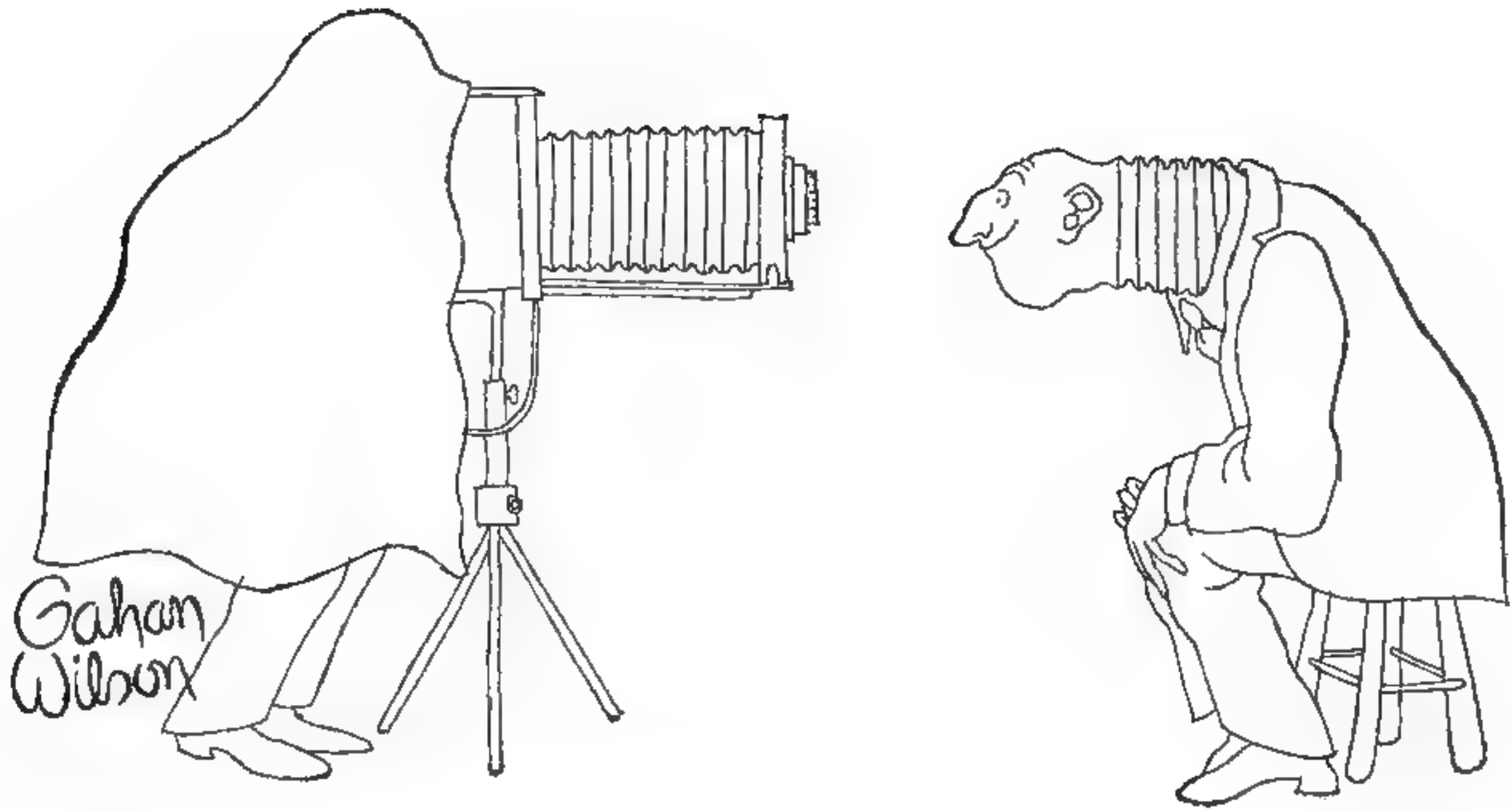
"Look—there it goes again!"



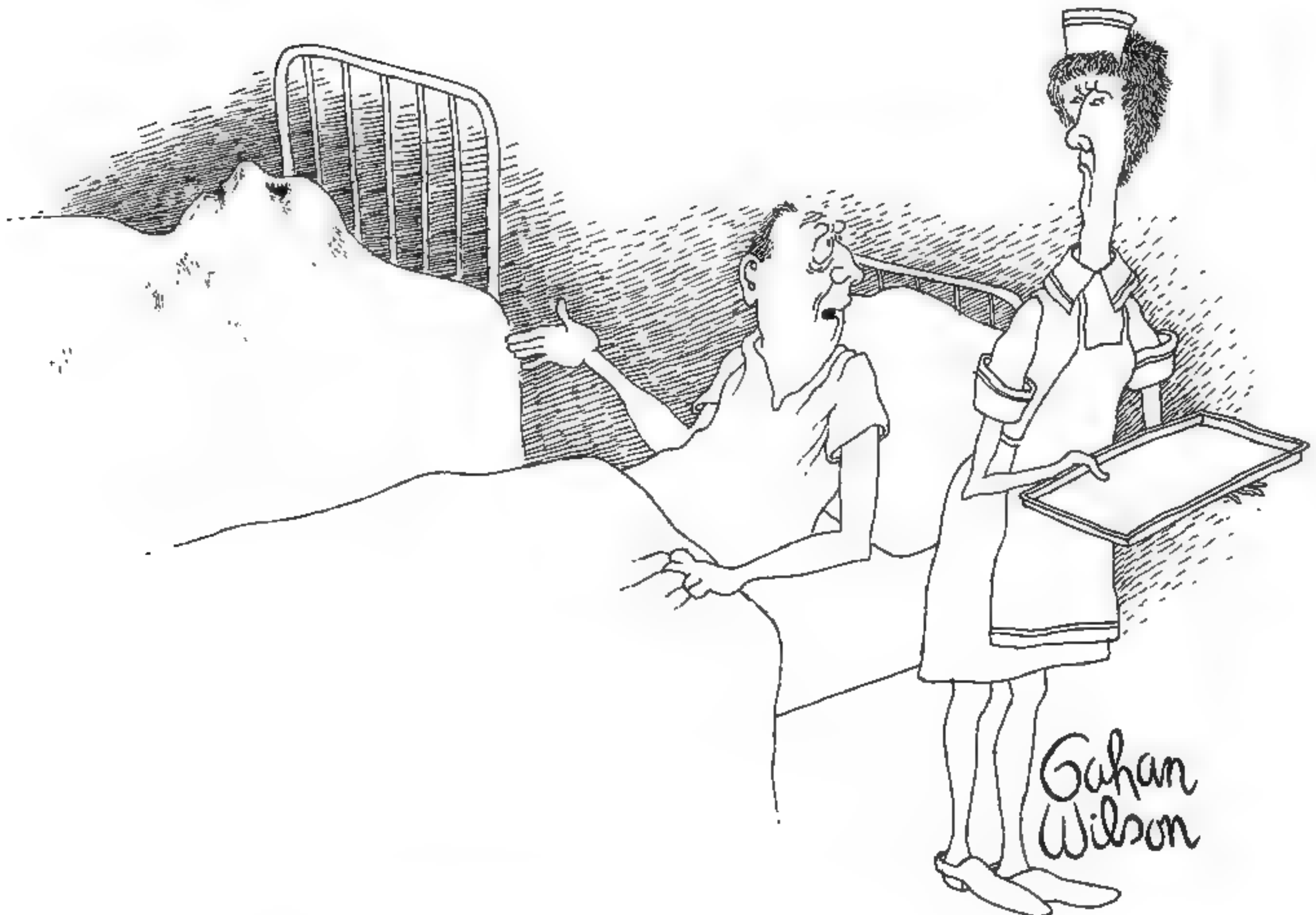
"Sometimes I wish to God they'd never moved next door!"



"Is nothing sacred?"



"I don't understand why I can't keep you in focus!"



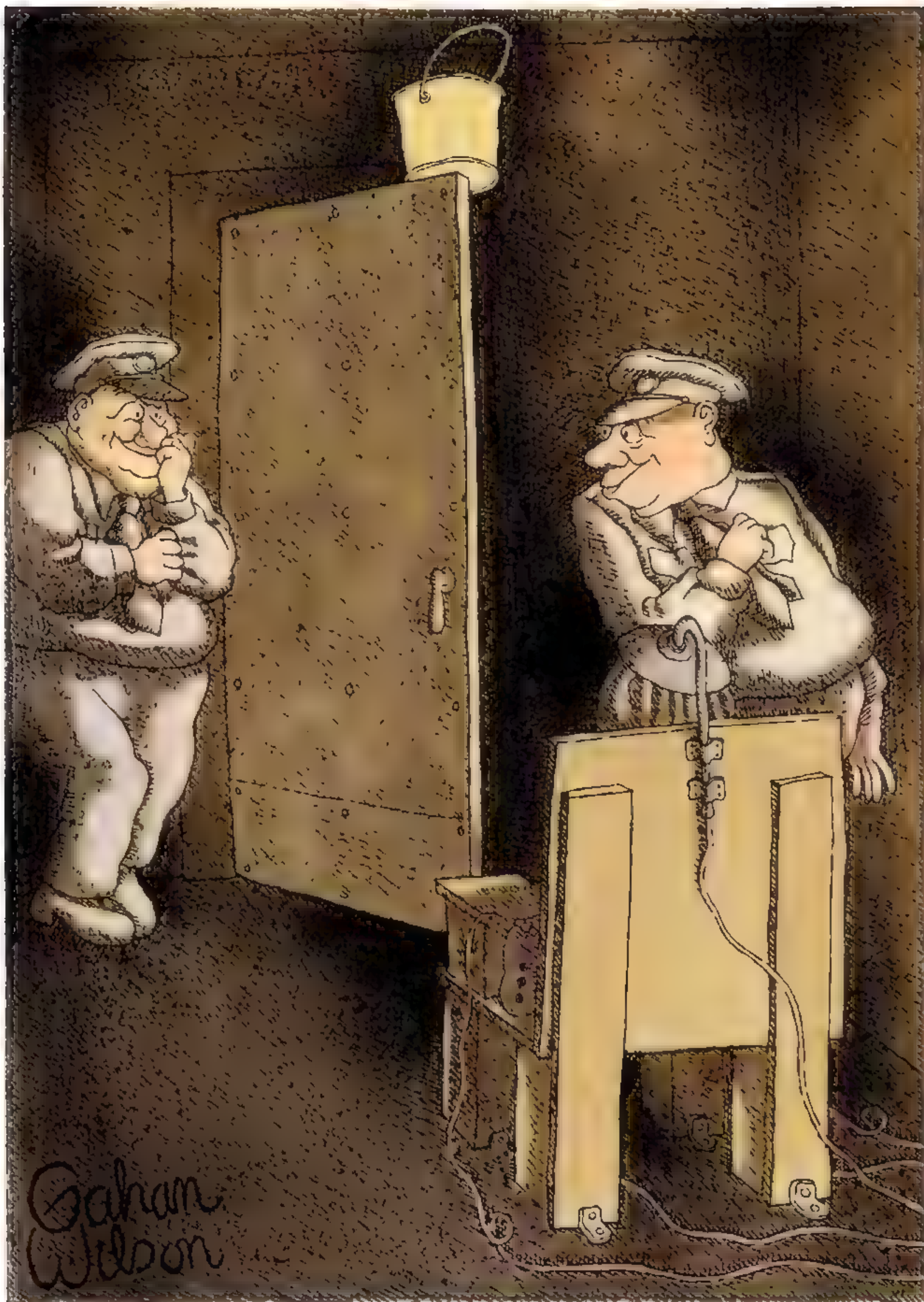
*"Nurse, would you please do something about that?
It's really getting to be awfully depressing!"*



"Not bad. Not bad at all."



"Here, puss, puss, puss!"



"Here they come!"



"That settles it. I'm moving for a retrial."



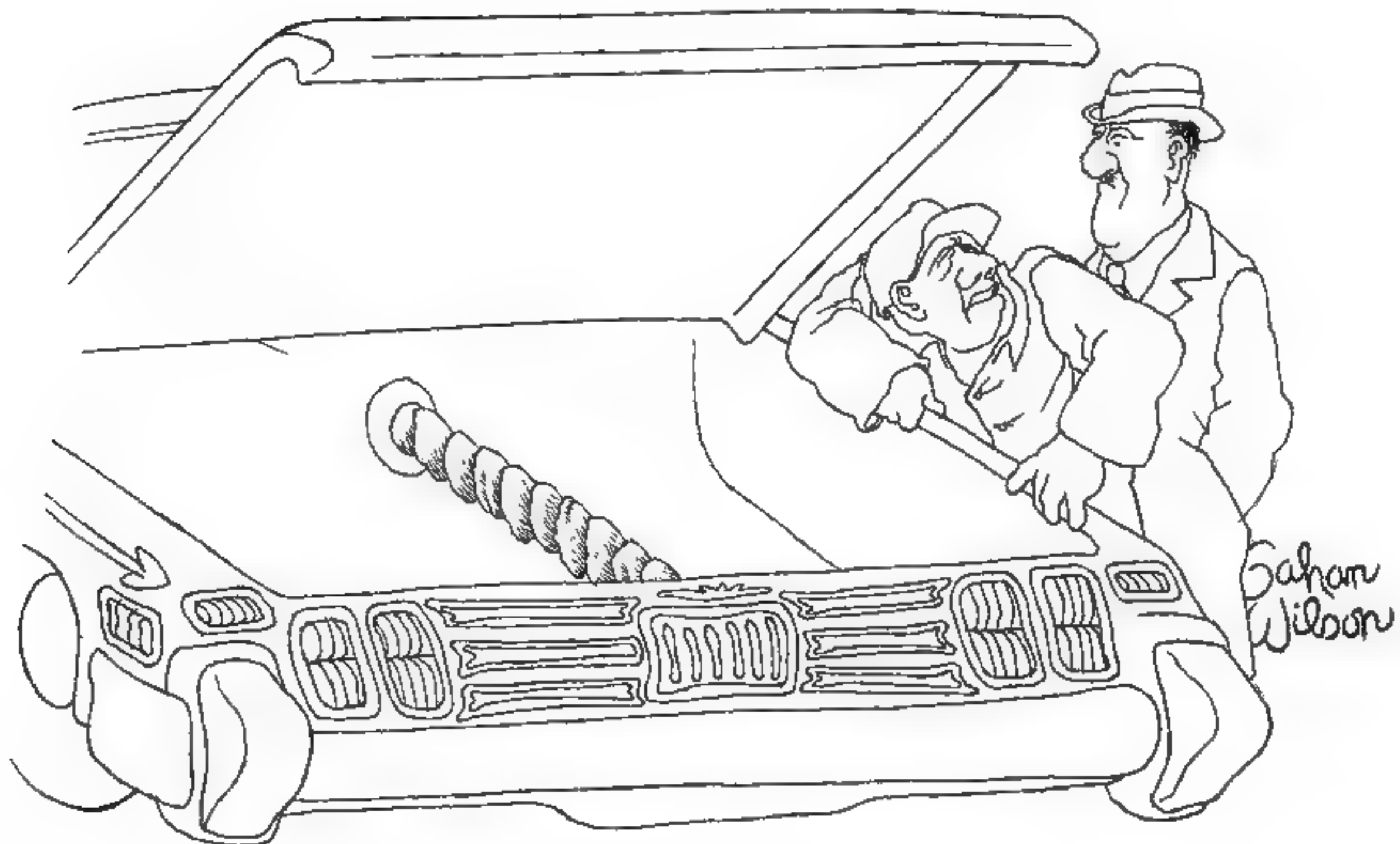
"Wake up, you idiot—you forgot to turn off the hat!"



"To get back to the main road, you turn left at the fork just before the bridge and go around yonder hill to Dark Hollow...."



"Madam, I should have thought one of those would have been more than enough."



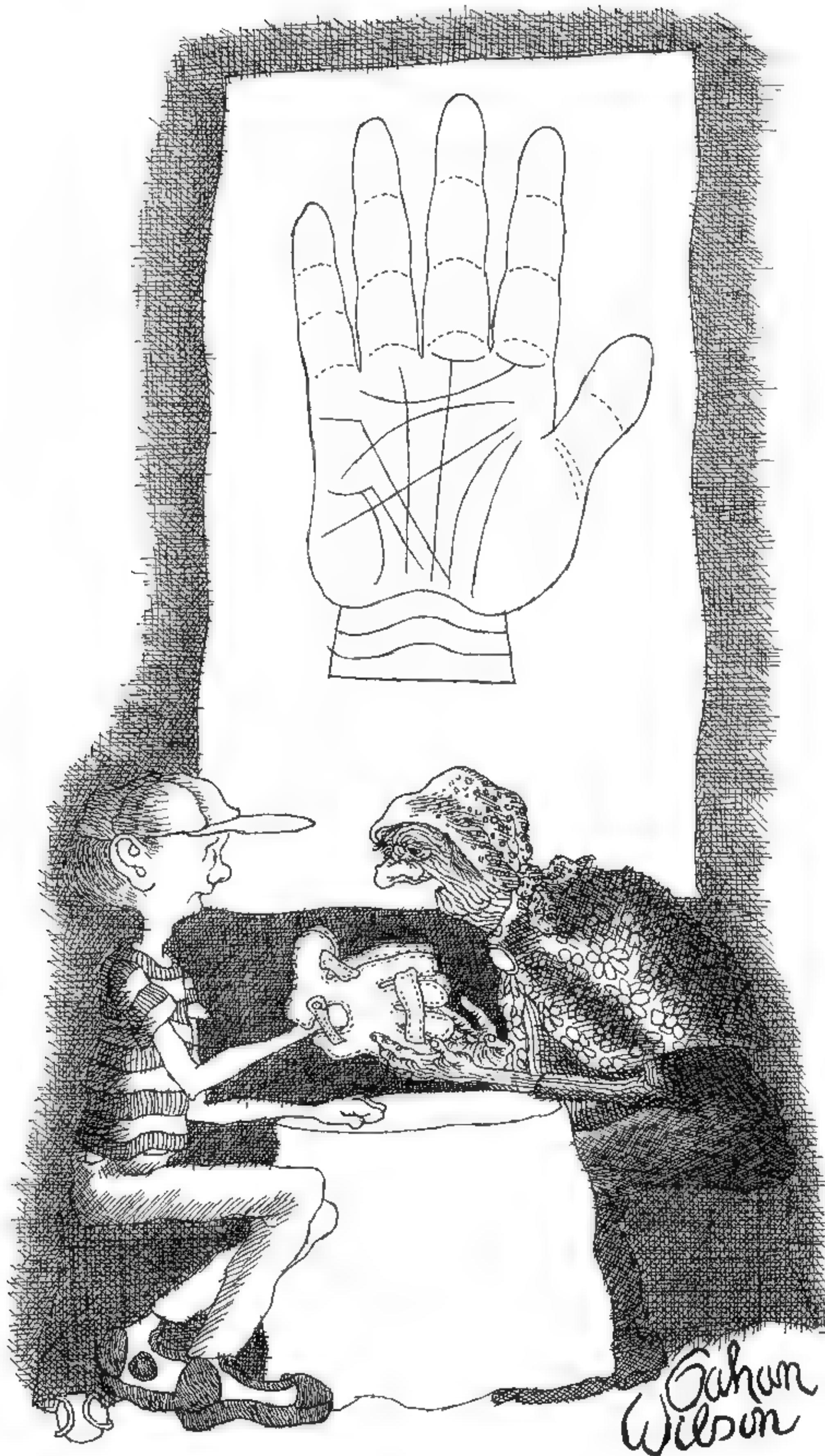
"It's what I figured. Your rubber band has gotten old."



"This is not going to help my Messianic complex, doctor."

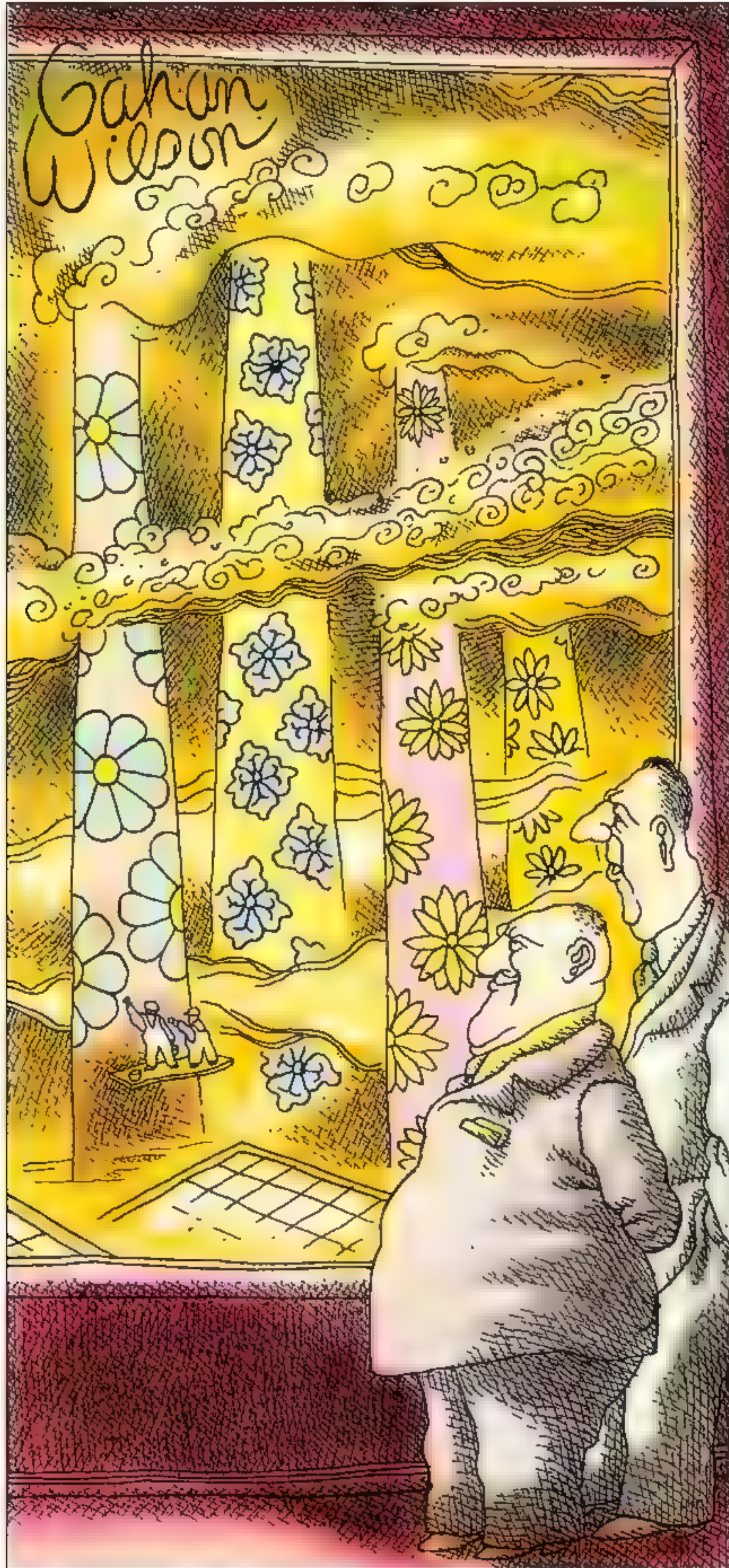


"Harriet—how could you?"



"You have a strong interest in sports."



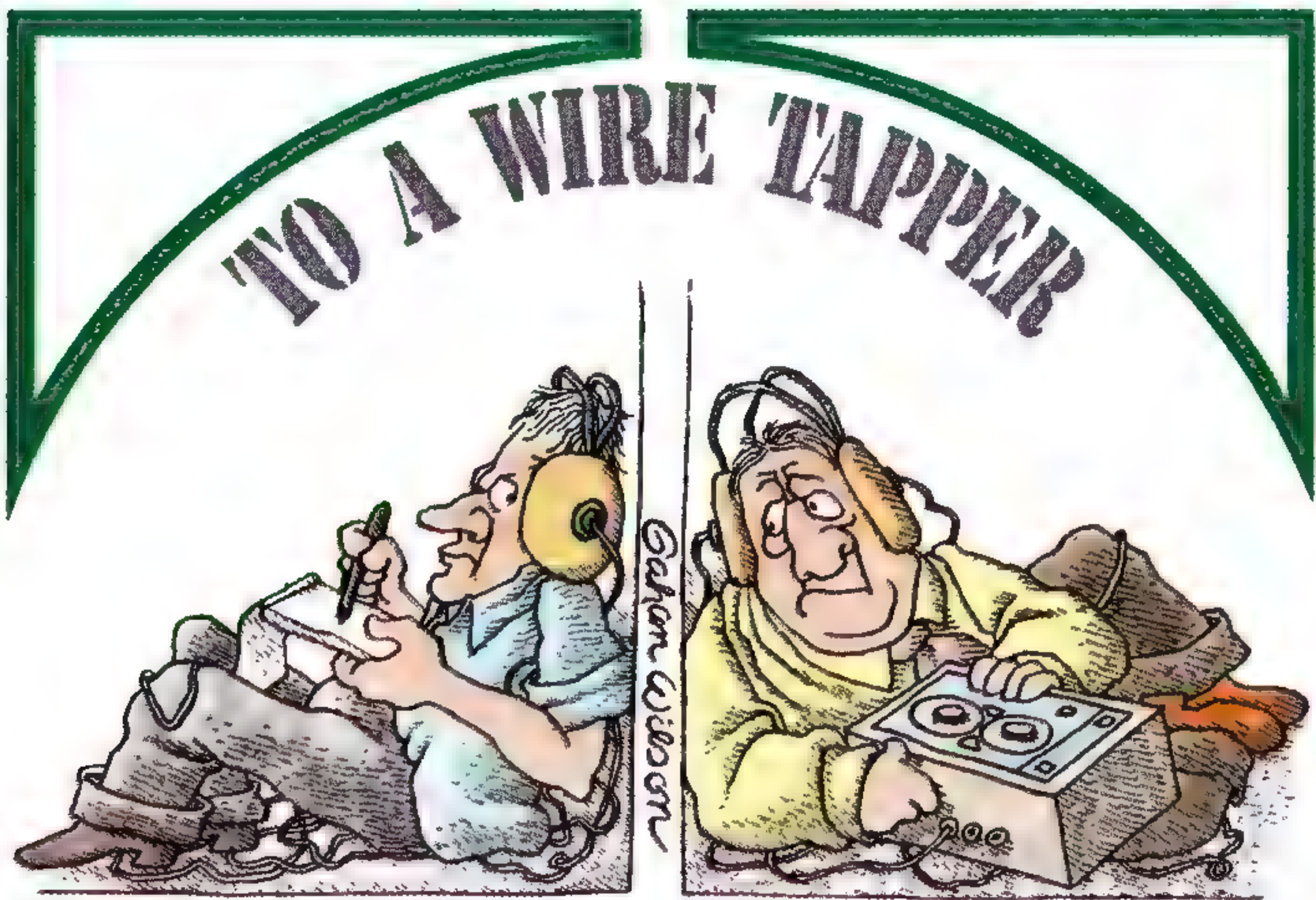


"It probably isn't going to pacify them, Chief."



"You fool—I'm CIA, too!"





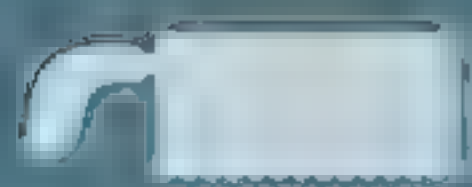
Though all the world recoiled in shock
 At tales of your skulduggery,
 You only did what you do best—
 Just good old-fashioned buggery.

"To a Wire Tapper" illustration for Playboy's Christmas Cards feature.



Gahan Wilson

FIFTY YEARS of PLAYBOY CARTOONS



FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS, INC.

Gahan Wilson

FIFTY YEARS of PLAYBOY CARTOONS





SAWYER BOB
"REALLY HANDY LEGAL ADVICE"

DR. PETE
FIND OUT IF YOU'RE SICK NOW!

DR. PETE

Schon
Wilson



INTRODUCTION *by*

NEIL GAIMAN

I have an embarrassing admission to make: when I was a barely pubertal schoolboy I did not look at *Playboy* for the articles. I did not actually care about the articles. Interviews with American politicians or movie stars left me unmoved, reviews of stereo equipment or sports cars or cocktails meant nothing to me. No, I went to *Playboy* for the pictures.

I was not old enough to buy it, nor brave enough to steal it, so each month I would head into my High Street W.H. Smiths, and go up on tiptoes, and reach up and take *Playboy* down from the topmost shelf. Then I would slick through it as rapidly as possible, past the Playboy Advisor, past the naked ladies (pneumatic, terrifying creatures, quite unlike the girls at local schools I would stare at awkwardly and with longing when I passed them on the street), past the short stories (even if I wanted to read them there would not be time before a shop assistant spotted me), until I found it. It was always there: the Gahan Wilson cartoon. And I would stare at it, at the strange, squashed Plasticene-faced people, at the vampires and the people building monsters, at the enormous aliens and raggedy mummies and acts of unspeakable cruelty and nightmare. ("What's the matter? Cat got your tongue?" asked one spouse of another. And under the seat was the cat, and it had.)

Above: Gahan Wilson, 1961.

Opposite: Rough for June, 1987 (p. 540).

In a magazine devoted to sex and aspirational lifestyle accoutrements, Gahan Wilson was about something else—a cockeyed, dangerously weird way of looking at the world. Even when sex entered the picture it did so strangely and awkwardly. (Superman, his back to us, flashes an old lady, who, unimpressed, retorts “You’re not so super.” Vampires view sleeping nubile as snacks. Werewolves... ah, you’ll find out.)

And, strangely, the knowledge that each *Playboy* had a Gahan Wilson cartoon in it somehow, for me, made *Playboy* cool in a way that the cars and the cocktails never could, just as the knowledge that Charles Addams was forbidden to draw the Addams Family characters in the pages of the *New Yorker* made that respectable magazine significantly less remarkable in my eyes.

Over the last two decades I have had the good fortune of encountering Gahan Wilson in the flesh: initially, oddly, as a book reviewer who said nice things about what I did. I wrote him a fan letter, got a wonderful letter back from him with a drawing of Mister Punch on it, and finally got to spend time in his company at a variety of conventions and meetings across America. Art Spiegelman and Françoise Mouly teamed us up for their *Little Lit* book, and I wrote a story for Gahan to draw that meant that I found myself interviewed when they made a documentary about him (*Born Dead, Still Weird*) and that the comic we did was beautifully animated for the movie: it had ghouls in it, and small children, and dead people, all of which traditionally show up in Gahan Wilson’s work.

In person, Gahan is tall. His face might possibly have been made out of Plasticene, but he is—and I doubt he will mind me telling you this—significantly better looking than many of the people, some of the monsters, and all of the aliens that he draws. He is, in person, a funny man, not with the compulsive joke making look-at me funny of comedians, but with a comfortably wry view of the world that he communicates with ease. He is affable and intelligent. He does not seem like a cartoonist—were I to pick a profession for him based on his looks it would be that of successful small-town mortician, I think, or owner of a backwoods motel. Or alien, squished uncomfortably into a Gahan Wilson shaped humanoid body suit, here to observe our ways and taste our wine and despoil our women.

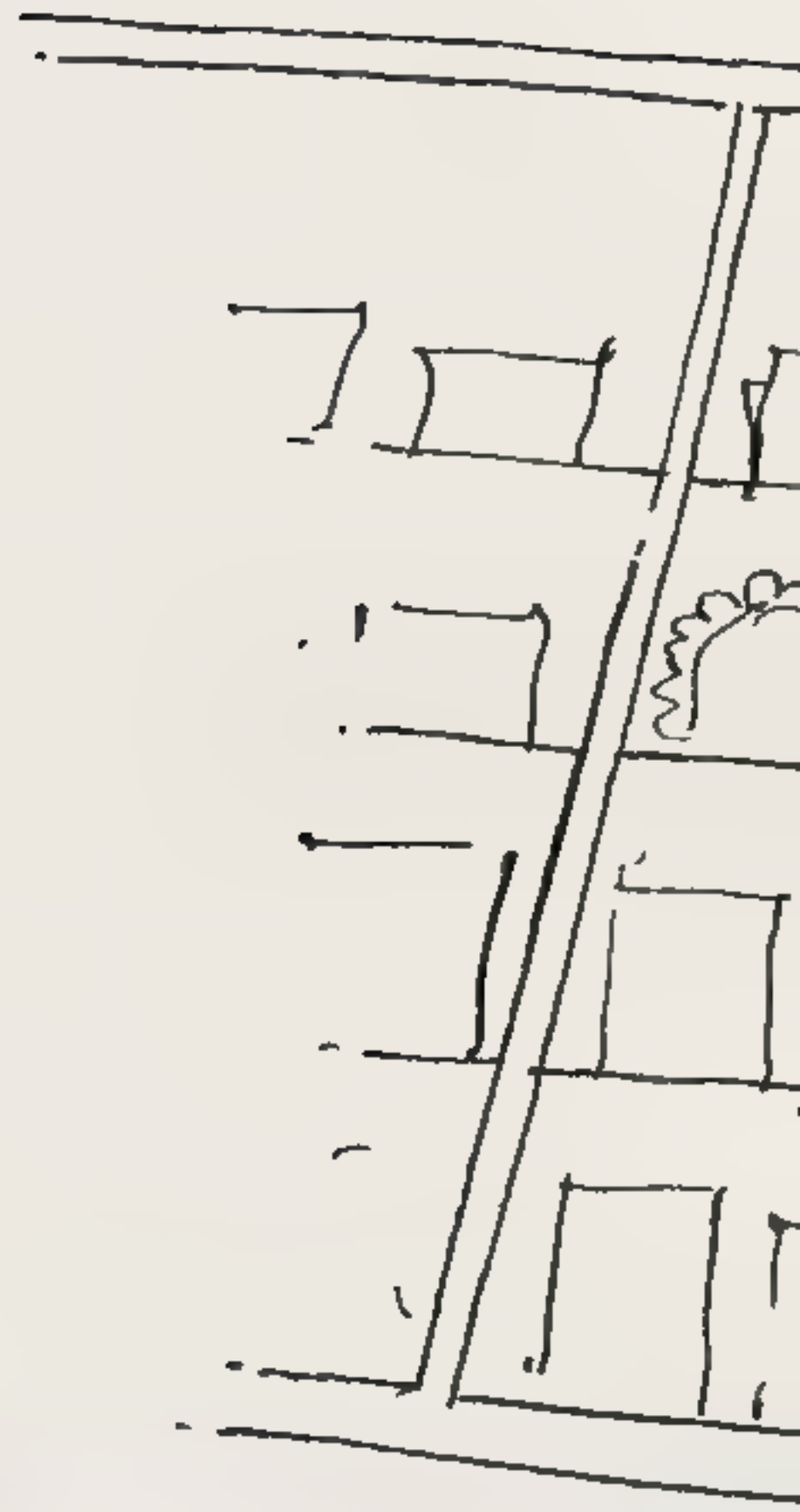
He operates in no tradition, although, on occasion I have seen people and lines in 19th century Japanese prints and, in one case, a five-hundred year old graffitied drawing of a monk and a dragon on the side of a Chinese temple that I could have sworn were made by Gahan Wilson’s pen. He draws on horror movies, on popular culture, on his own strange view of the world and of the permeability of language—not punning, but playing with words and popular expressions in ways that flex and stretch them, like a morbid poet. (“Is Nothing sacred?” asked a man in a

place where they worship Nothing. “How are they selling?” is asked of a sad-looking man with piles and piles of unsold hotcakes.)

Until now it was hard to be a real fan of Gahan Wilson’s *Playboy* work. I do not read every issue of *Playboy*, for a start, and these days the magazine is too often sold wrapped in plastic. And when Gahan Wilson’s cartoons have been collected in the past, the *Playboy* cartoons were often black and white reproductions of the color originals. This book made me happy and excited when the publisher told me it would exist, and it makes me happy and excited now — the idea of getting to see the Gahan Wilson *Playboy* cartoons as they were meant to have been seen, all of them collected together chronologically, is one that I find intrinsically wonderful. The world is a better place for having this book in it. No kidding, no hyperbole (well, maybe a little. But I mean it, so that makes it all right).

I’ll shut up now and get out of the way. You have pictures to look at that will make your world more interesting. I don’t know if these cartoons will taste the same without me having to do that nervous top-shelf dash. Possibly they will be better.

I trust these volumes will sell like hotcakes. †



"SOMEHOW I THOUGHT
THE WHOLE THING WOULD
BE A LOT CLASSIER!"

1-1
wire
color
14



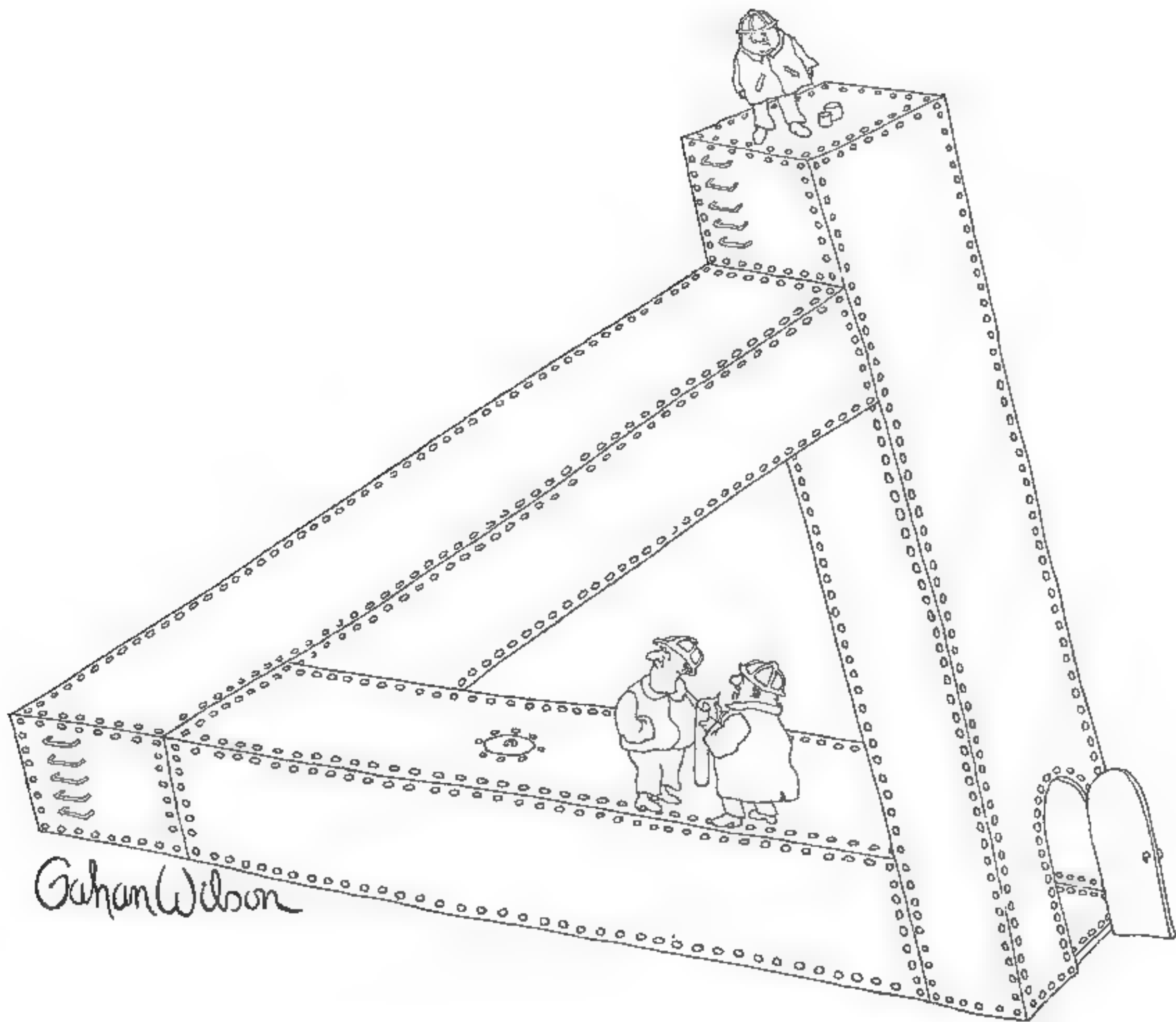
"I think it's time I told you my little secret, Miss Bigelow!"



"Must have cost him a fortune!"



*"Perhaps you'd care for a home medical encyclopedia
that is a little less specific, sir."*

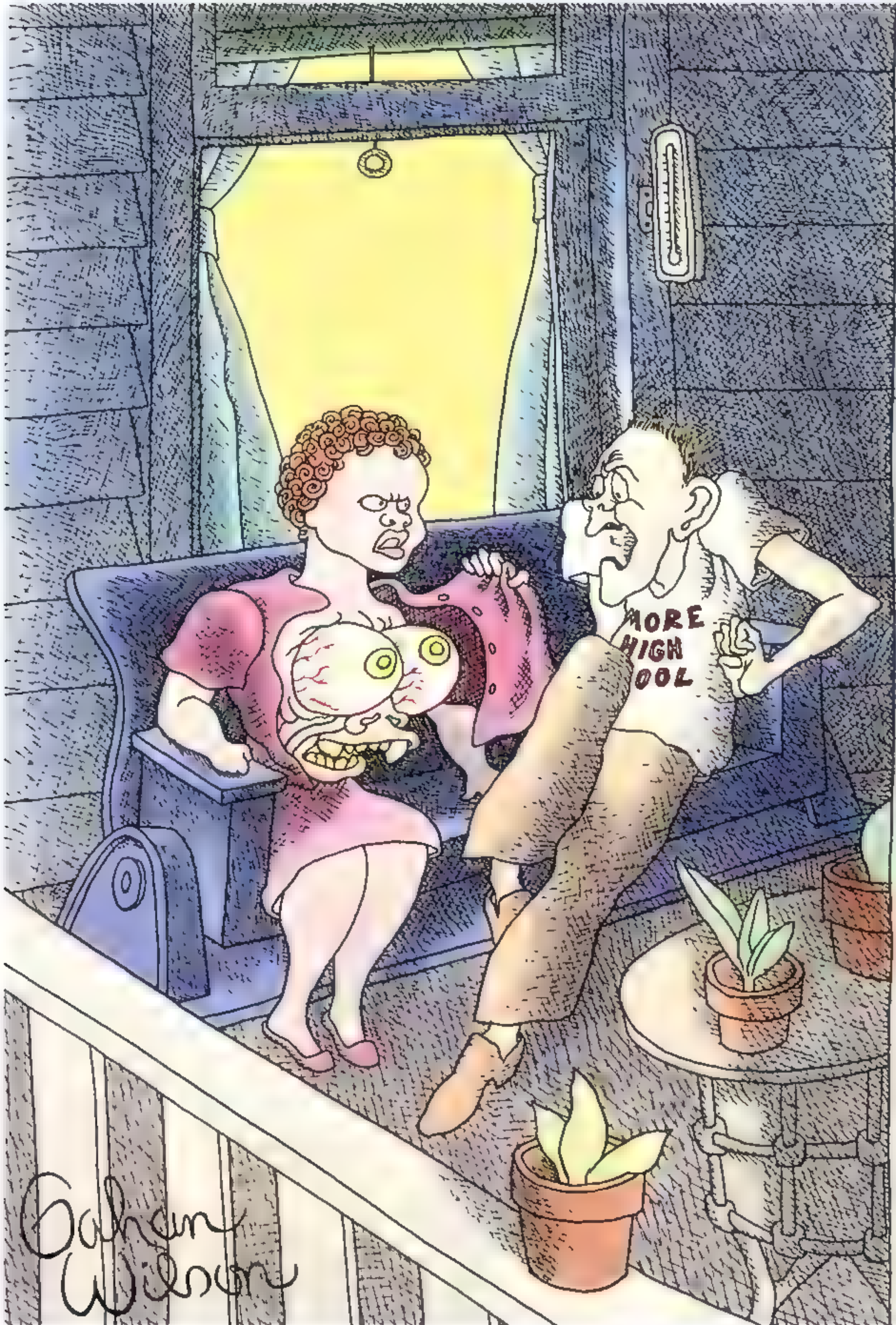


"Let's have another look at the blueprint."





"I'm helping him conquer his morbid fear of water."

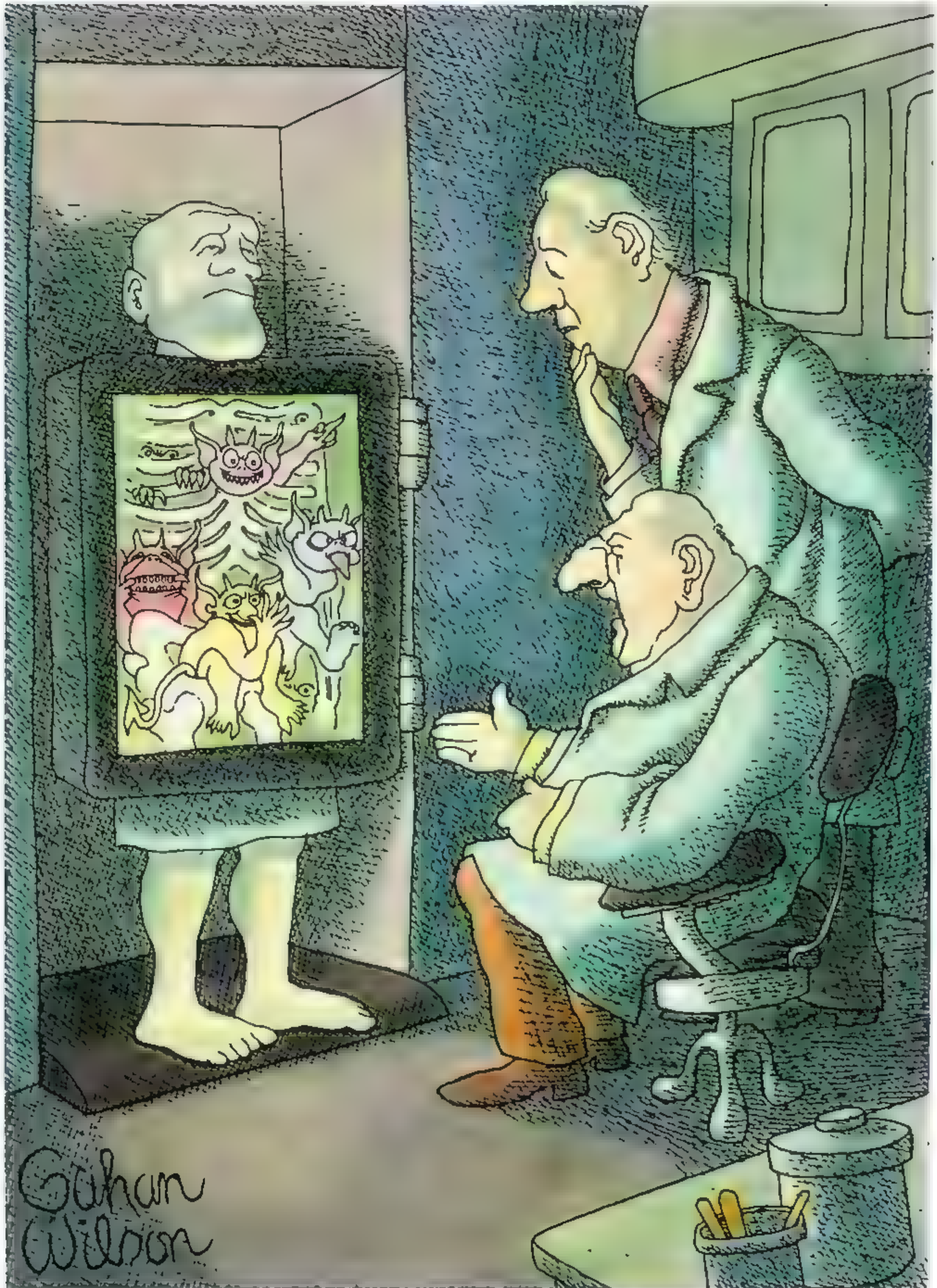


"I told you not to do that!"



Graham
Wilson

"Somehow I thought the whole thing would be a lot classier!"



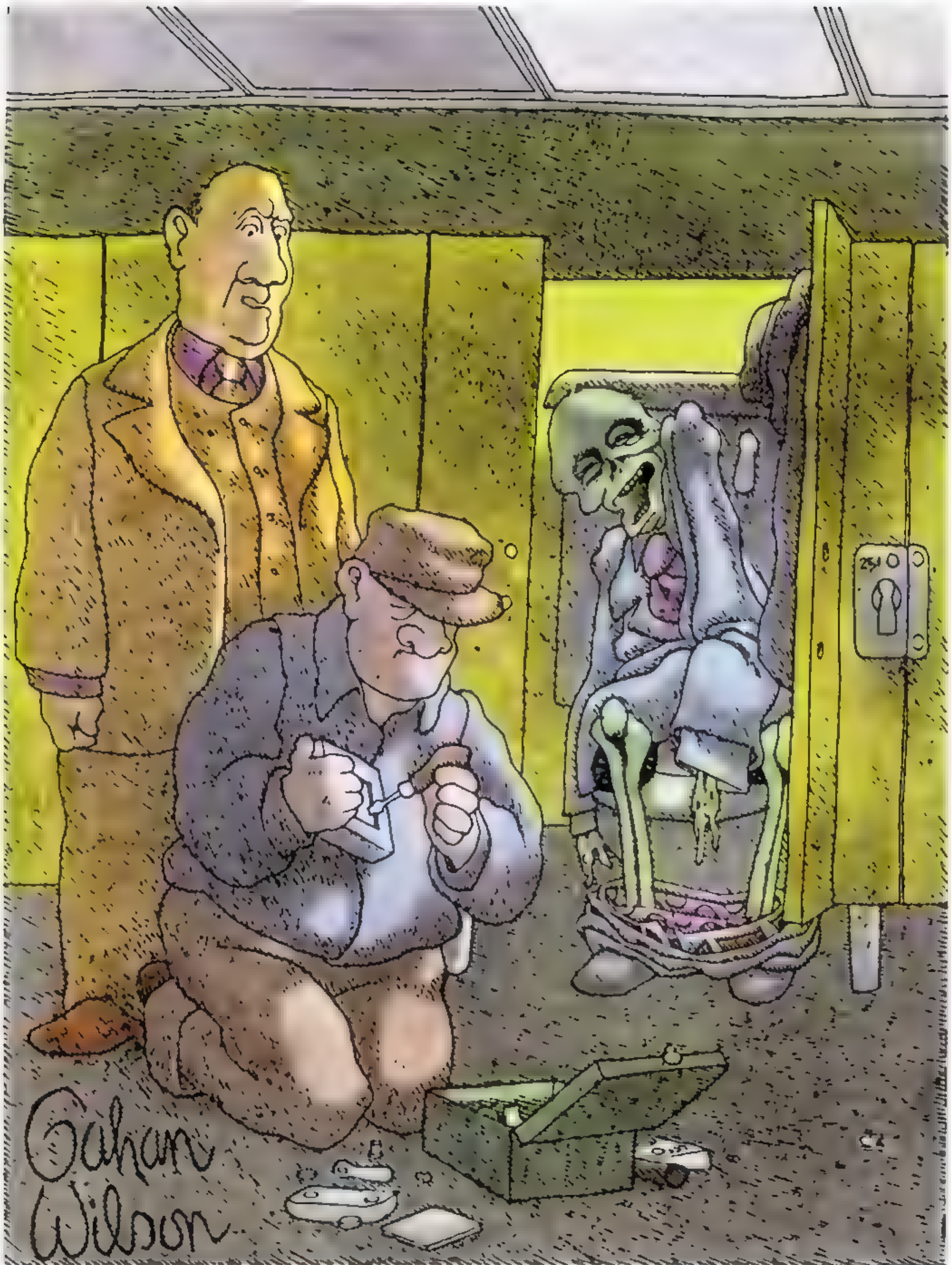
"It's as I suspected—Mr. Harding, here, is possessed by demons."



*"It strikes me you're making a deal more fuss
over this than it calls for, Dan'l."*



"Occupant, apartment 5C: Congratulations—you may already have won the all-electric Colonial split-level house of your dreams...."



"It's certainly high time you got around to fixing that lock, Straus!"



Gahan
Wilson

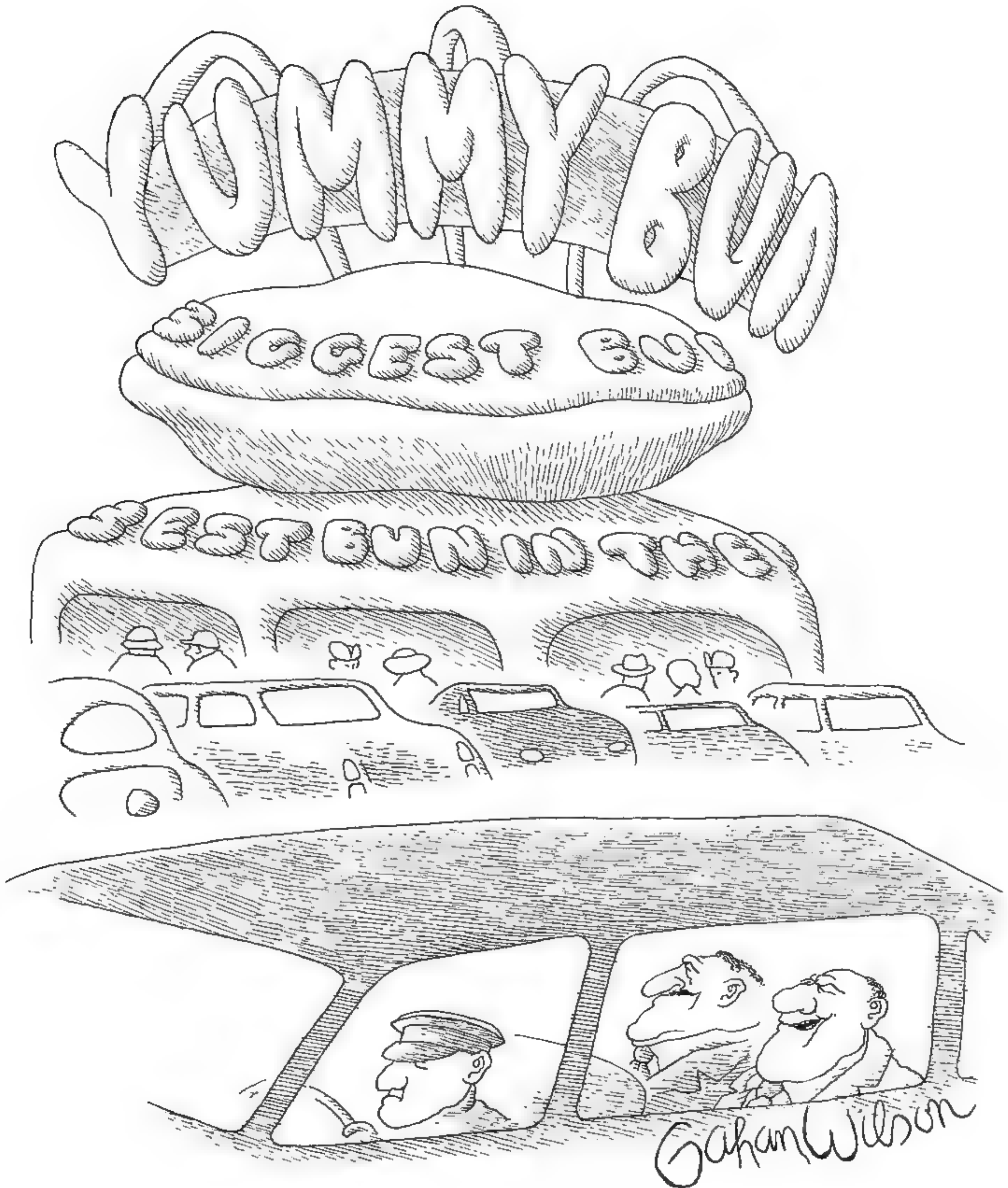
"Well, I guess we can scratch them as a potential source of fuel!"



"So I figured the public was getting bored with the cutesie-pie porpoises, and I was right!"



"Look—I appreciate your talking to me, and I know you mean well, but you're boring."



*"You've got to admit their outright elimination of the hamburger
was a stroke of sheer financial genius!"*



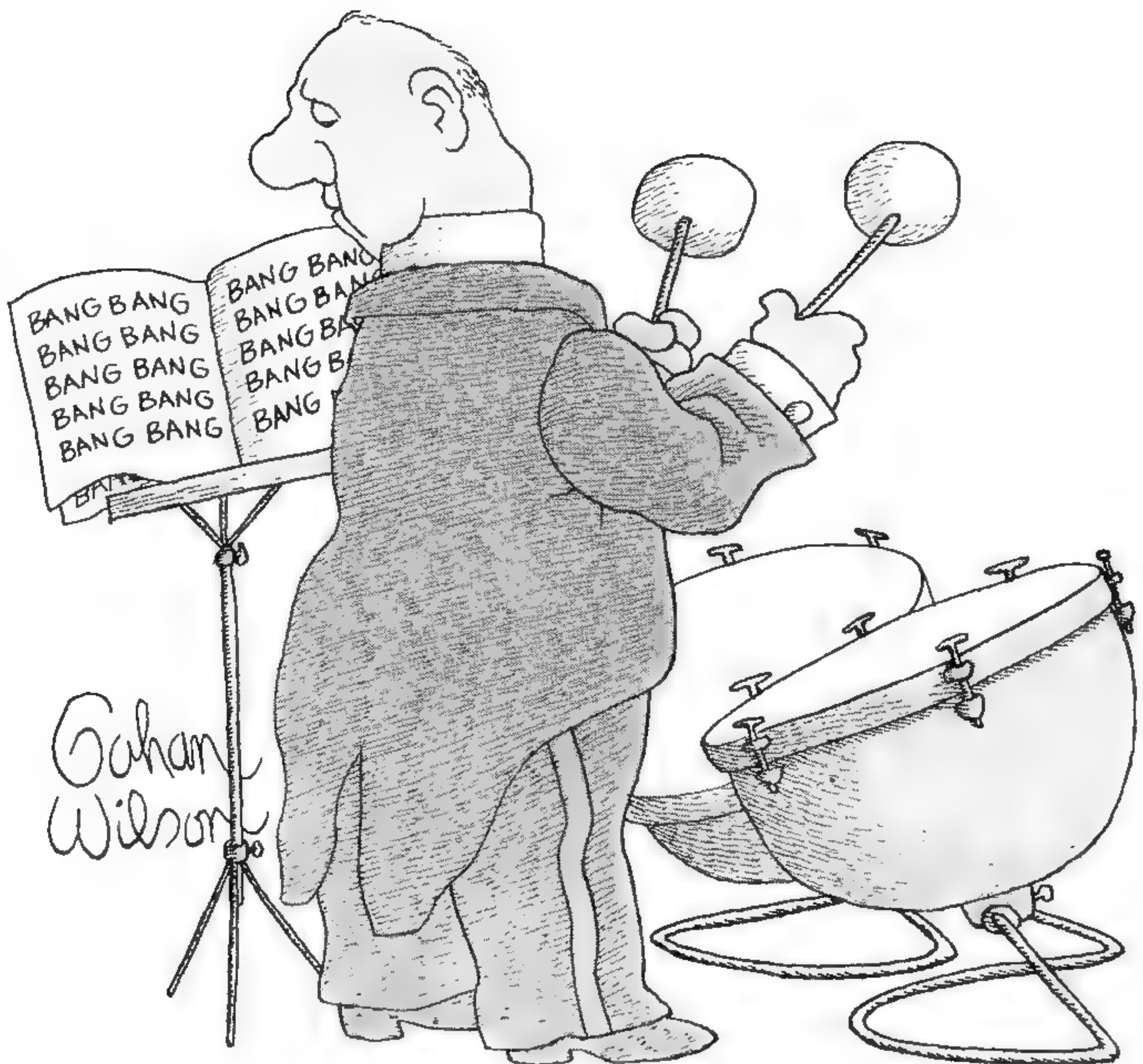
"I suppose my size has something to do with it!"



"Why didn't my lawyer tell me about this?"



*"Well, I guess that's the last time the Cullings
ever invite us over!"*





"Talk about your cut-rate operations...."



*"How many times do I have to tell you, mister?
We don't carry 3-D comics anymore."*



"Well, we found out u'hat's been clogging up your drains!"





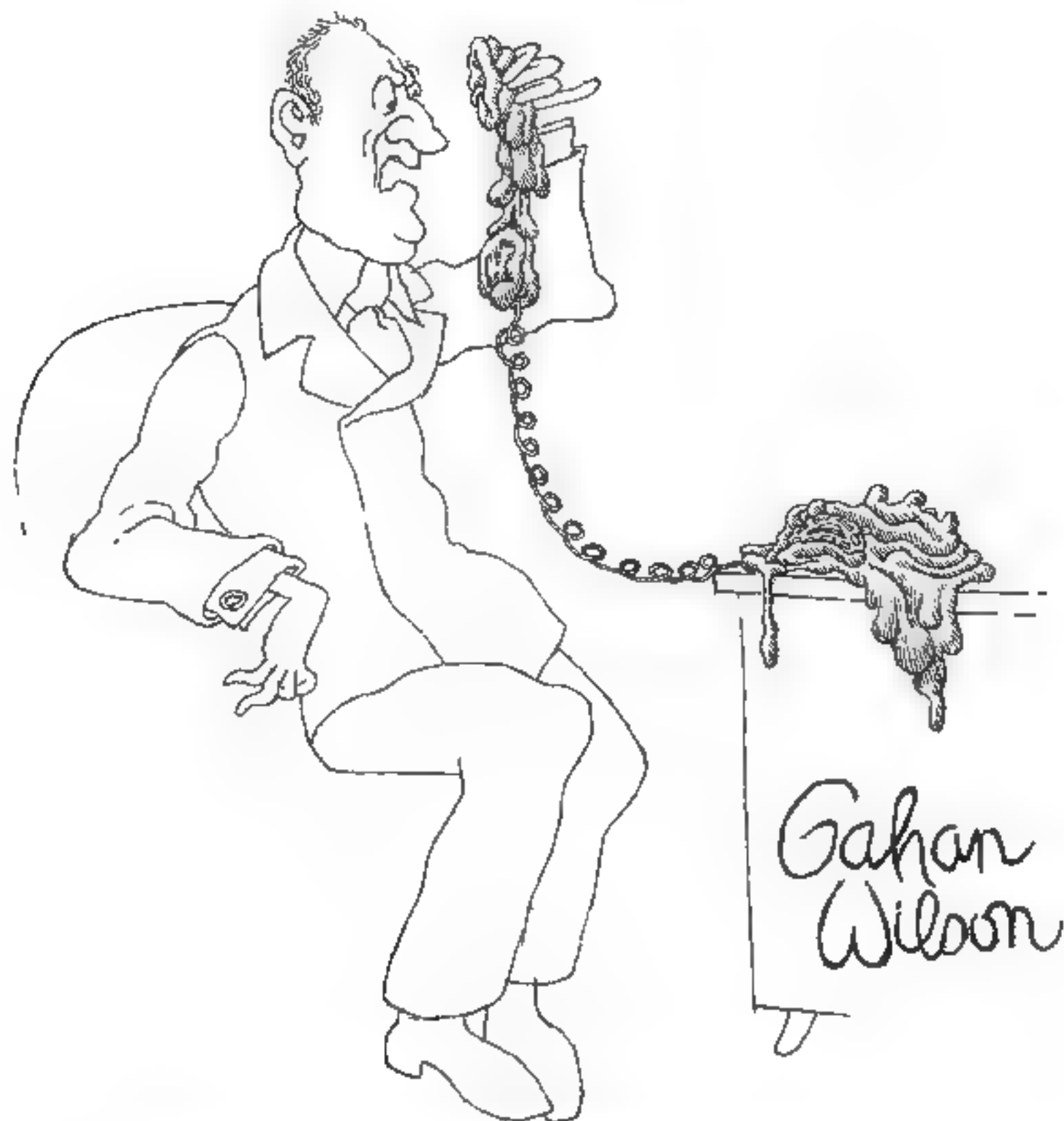
*"Surely, Nurse Greer, you must have had some suspicion
Mr. Appleton was no longer here!"*



"I've come across a rather disturbing find, Carstairs!"



"My apologies to you guys—I never thought you'd get away with it!"



"I'd like the Service Department, please!"



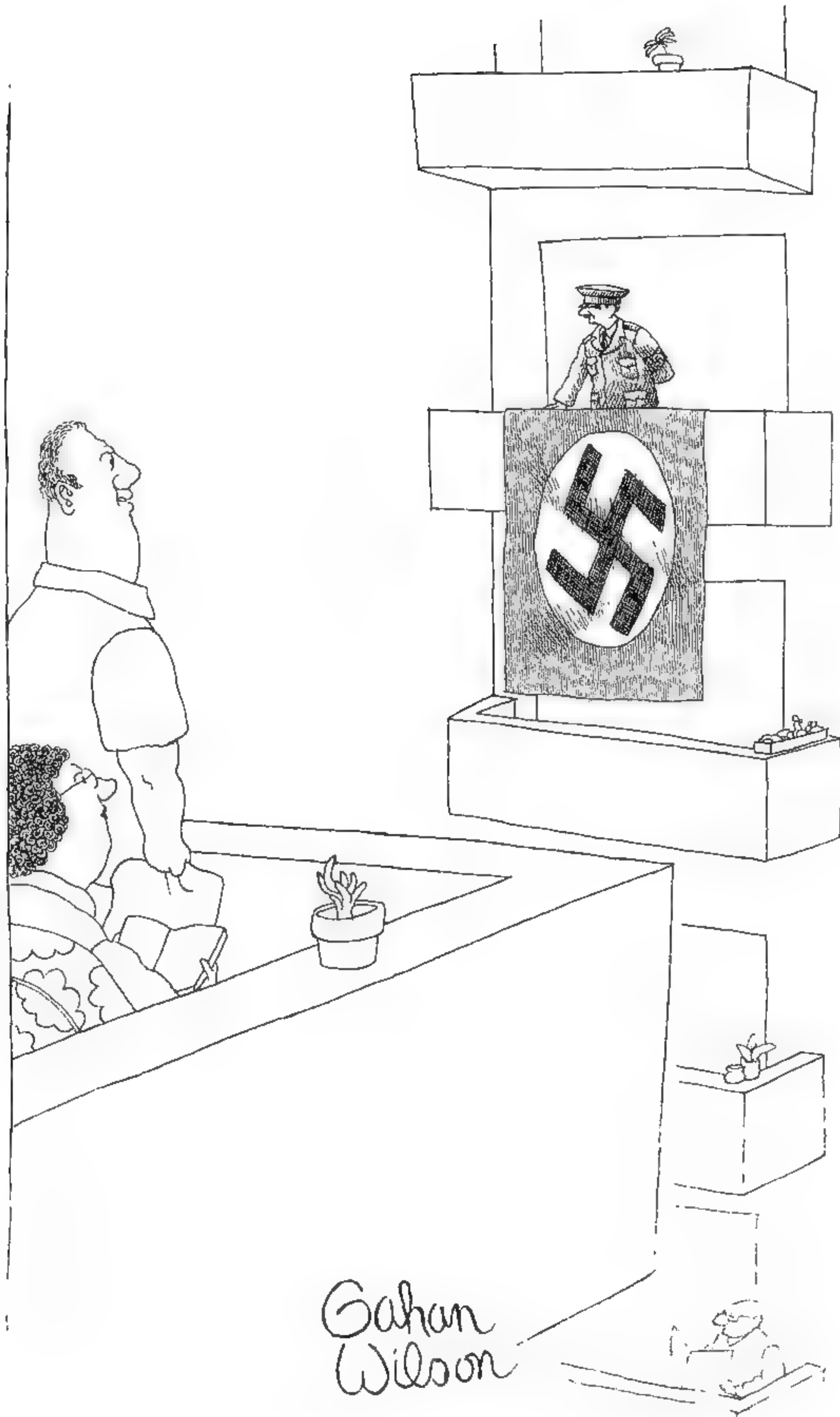
Graham
Wilson



Graham
Wilson



*"I'm afraid our expedition has been a trifle
too successful, professor."*



"I can't say I like the looks of that at all!"



"I think I've found the trouble, Mr. Nadler!"



"We've heard the rumors, ma'am—there's absolutely nothing to them."



"Gee, Amelia, I'm really very sorry you won't be able to make it here tonight."



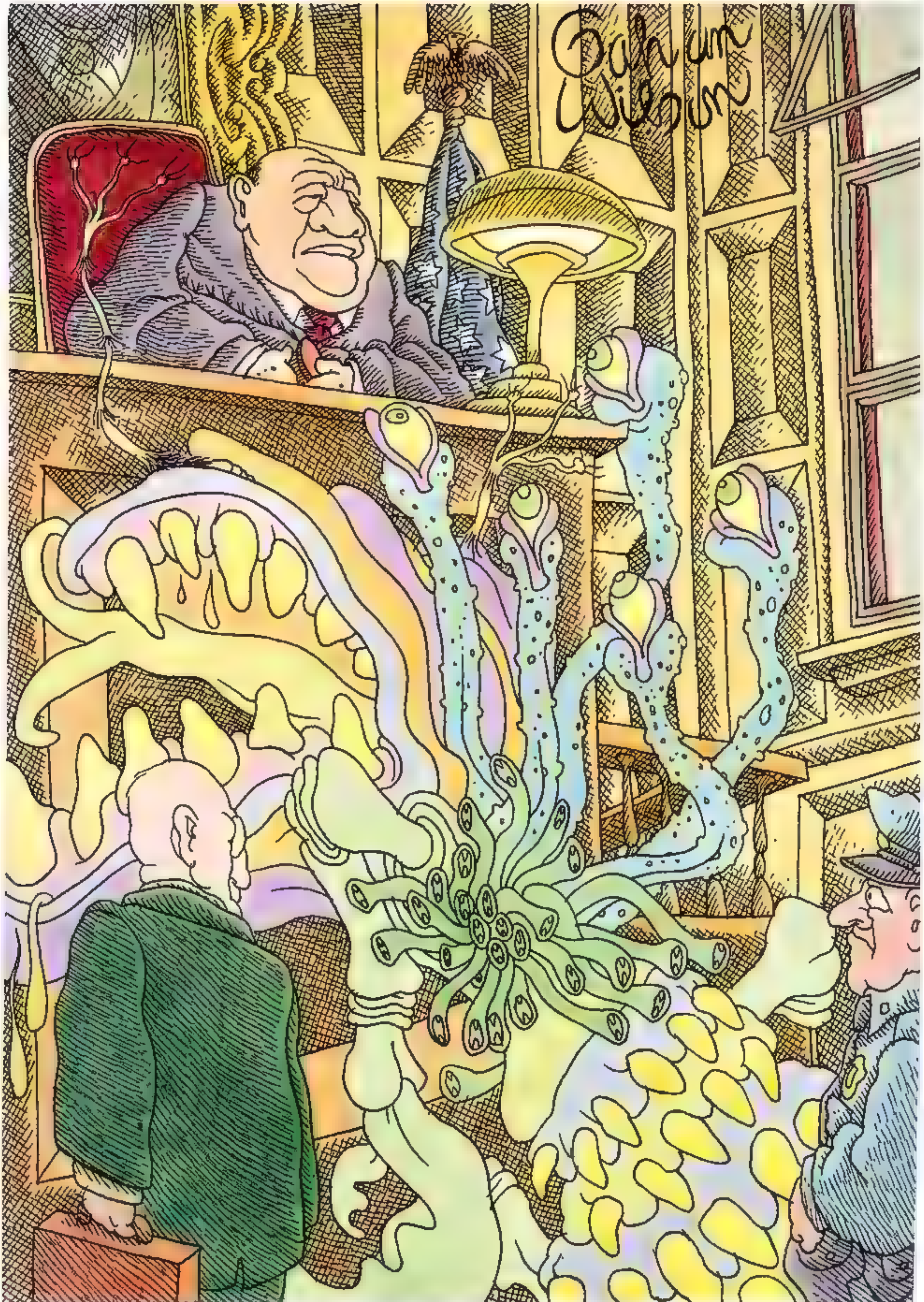
"How many times I got to ask you to go easy on the stops?"



*"We were thinking, J.W., just off the top of our heads,
of course—why not make the stuff addictive?"*



"Mr. Sherman, you hired our team of management consultants to streamline your enterprise, and that is precisely what we are doing."

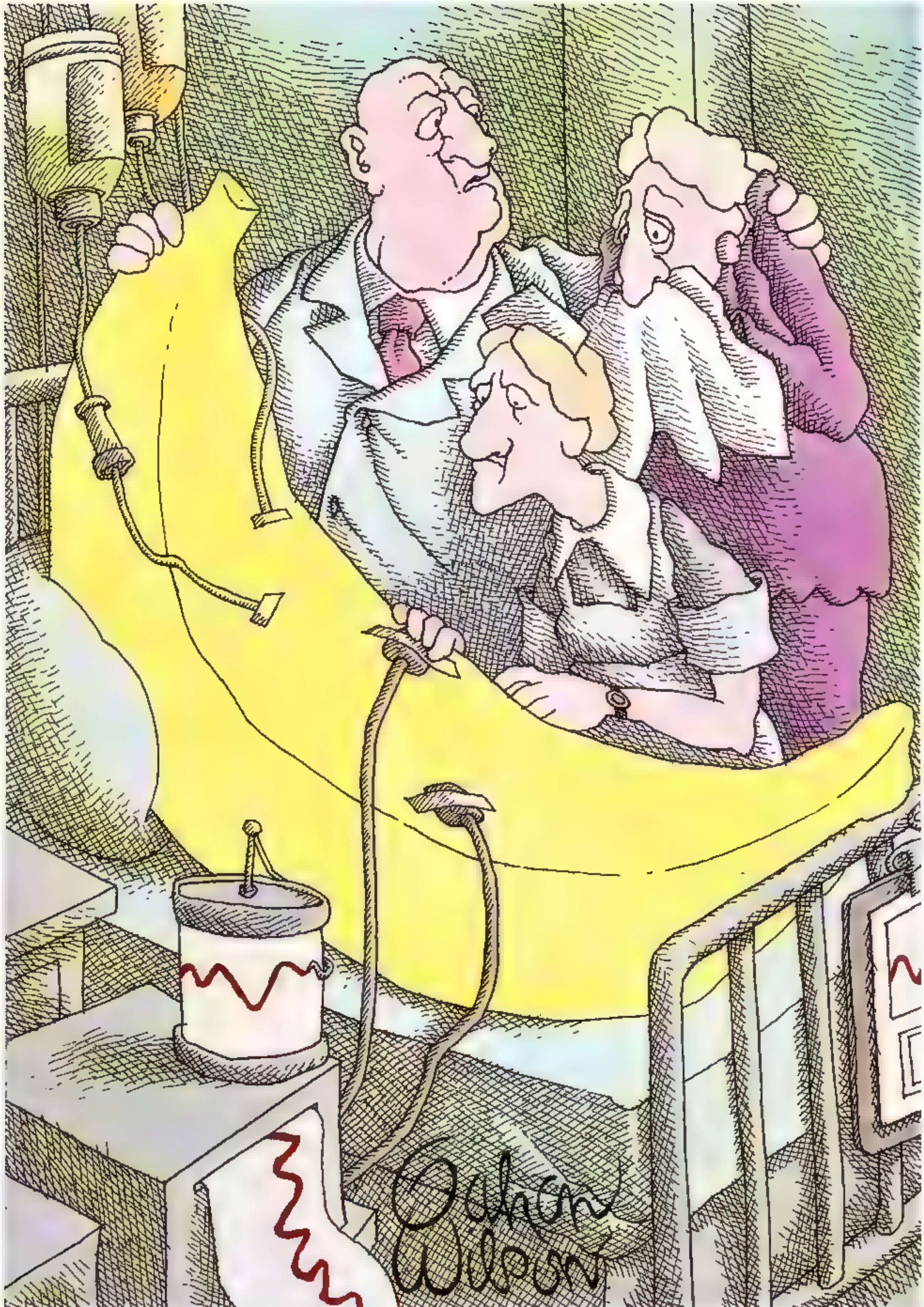


*"Has the defendant anything to say before
this court passes sentence?"*



Graham
Wilson

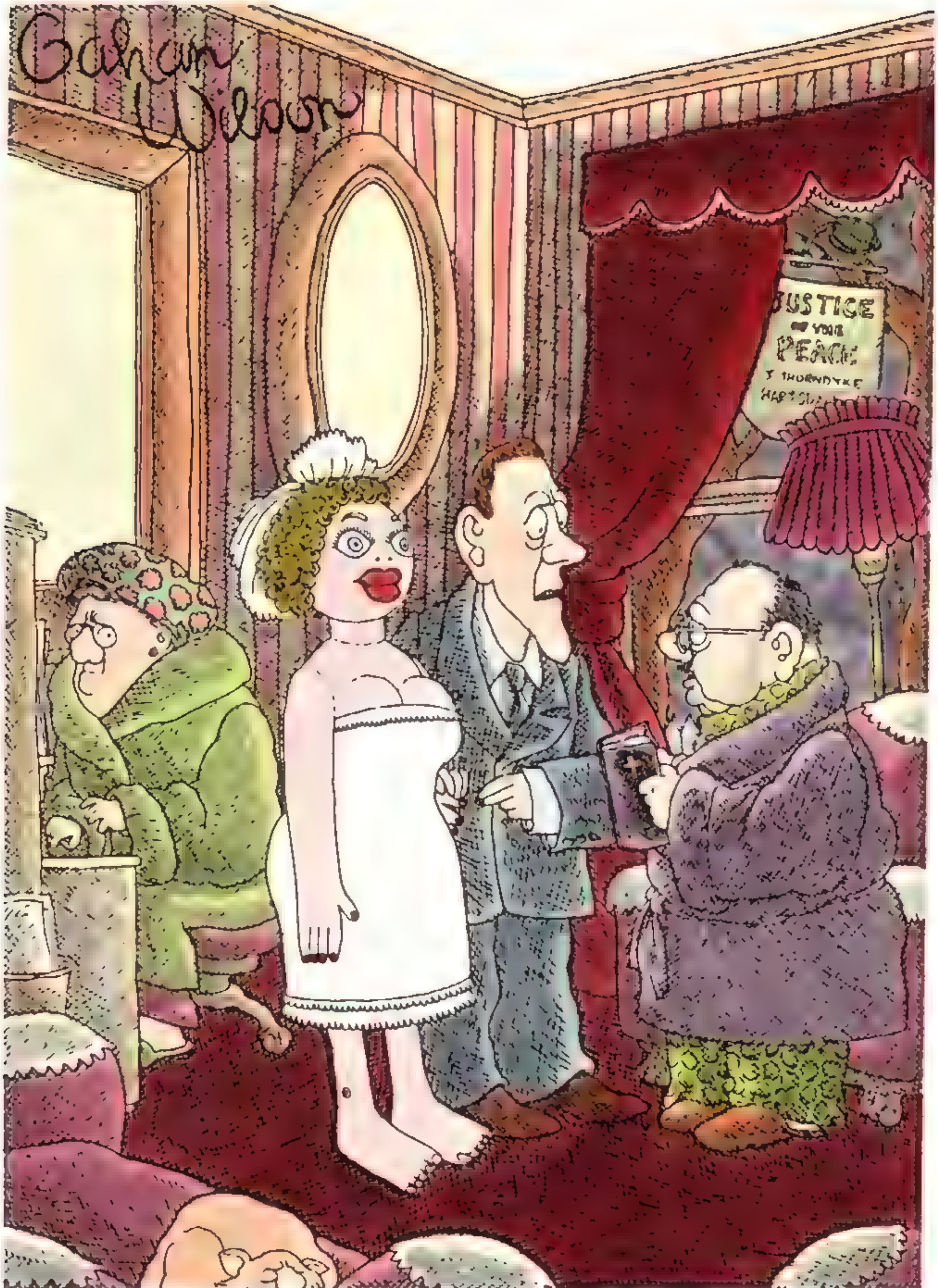
"I guess it's some kind of an orgy!"



"I'm afraid we'll have no chance of curing your husband until we find out why he changed into a banana."



*"I'm not talking about your Abominable Snowman, mister—
I'm talking about that diamond tiara!"*



*"I'm sorry, young man, I just can't go through
with this ceremony!"*



*"Of course, the place wouldn't seem so small
if we weren't elephants."*



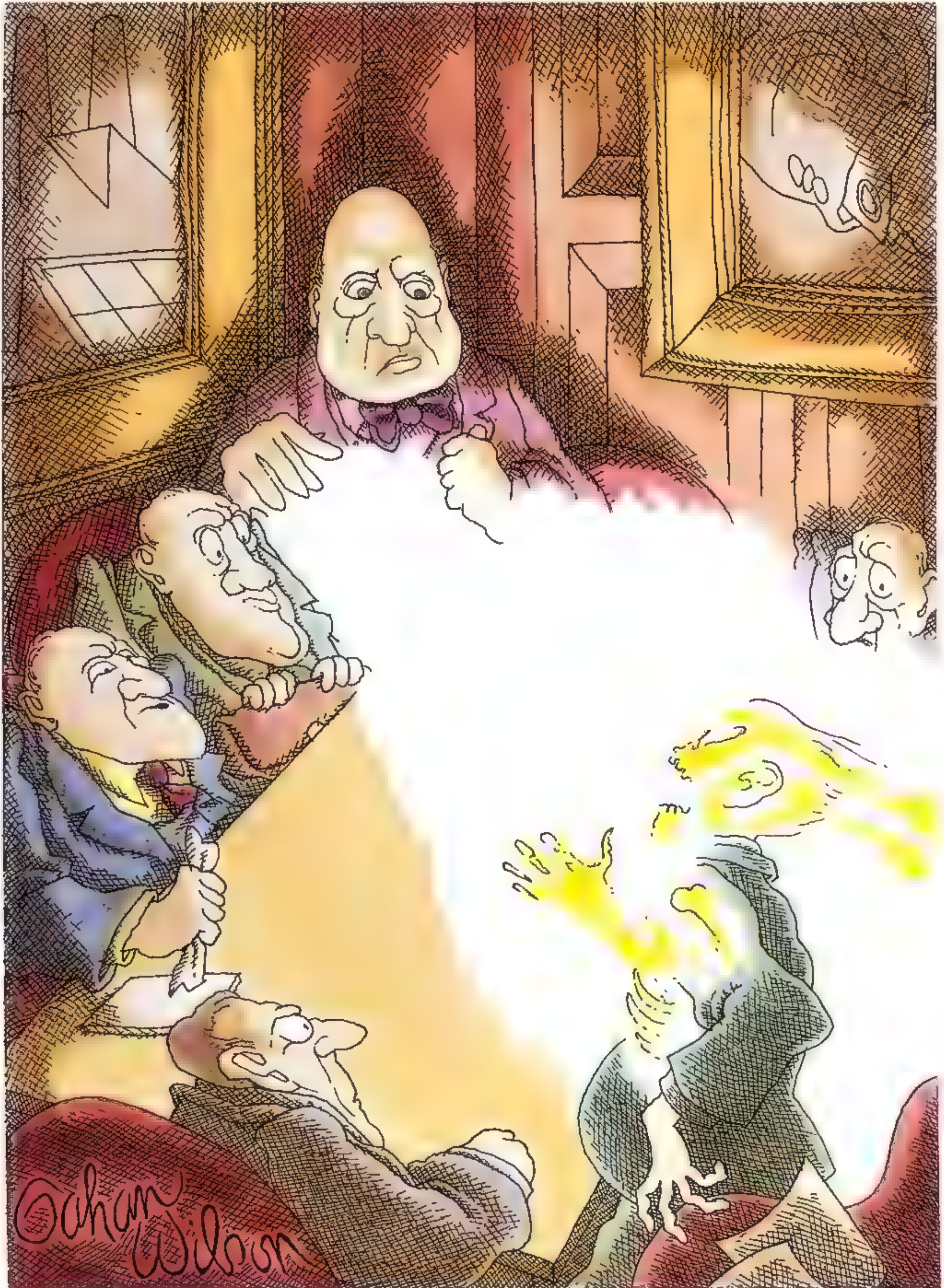
"Why, those aren't my slippers!"



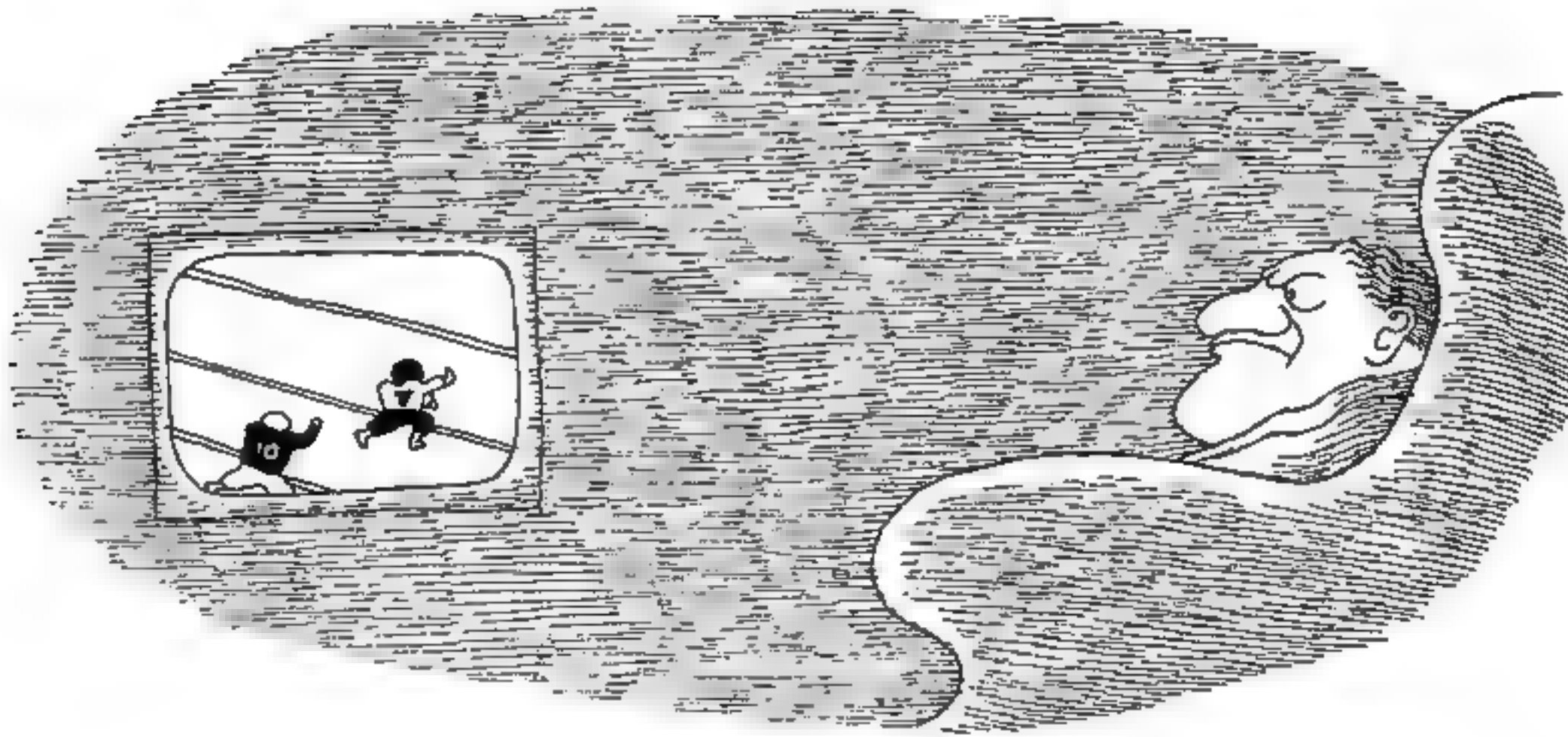
"As my late husband, here, used to say...."



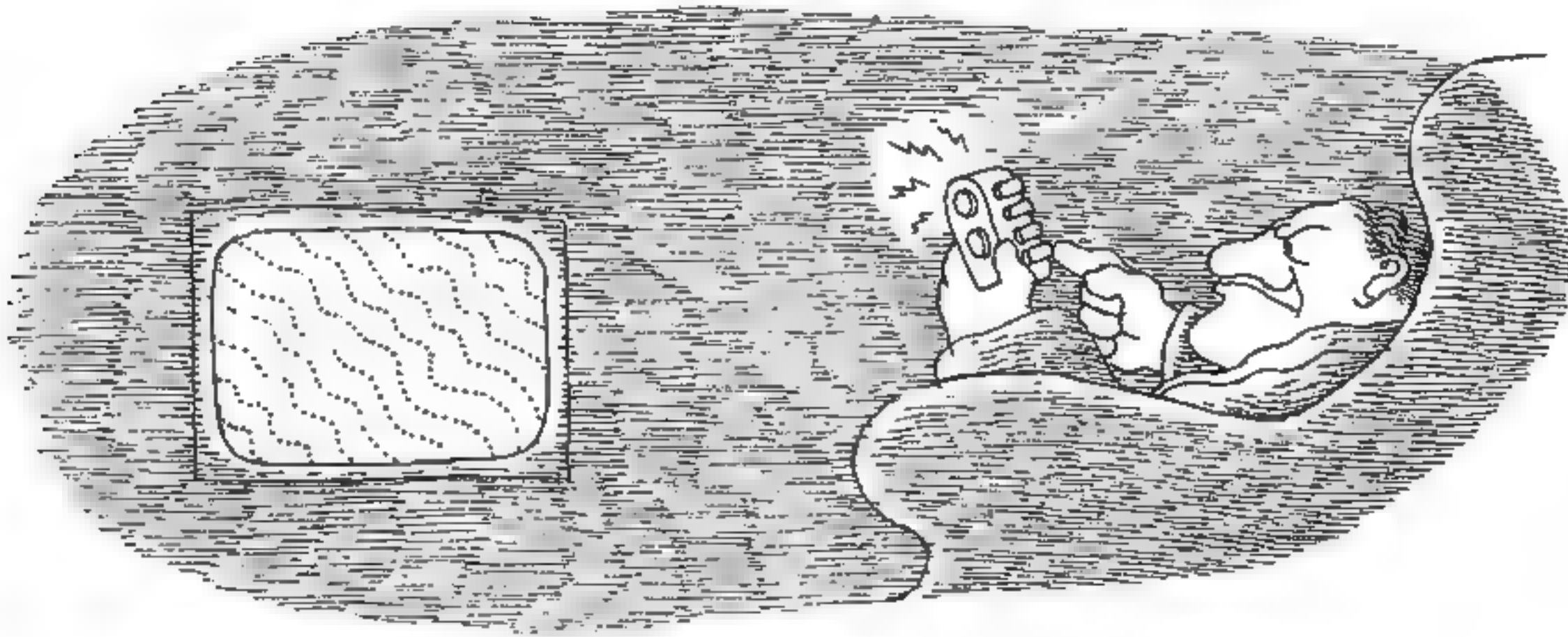
"Charles!"



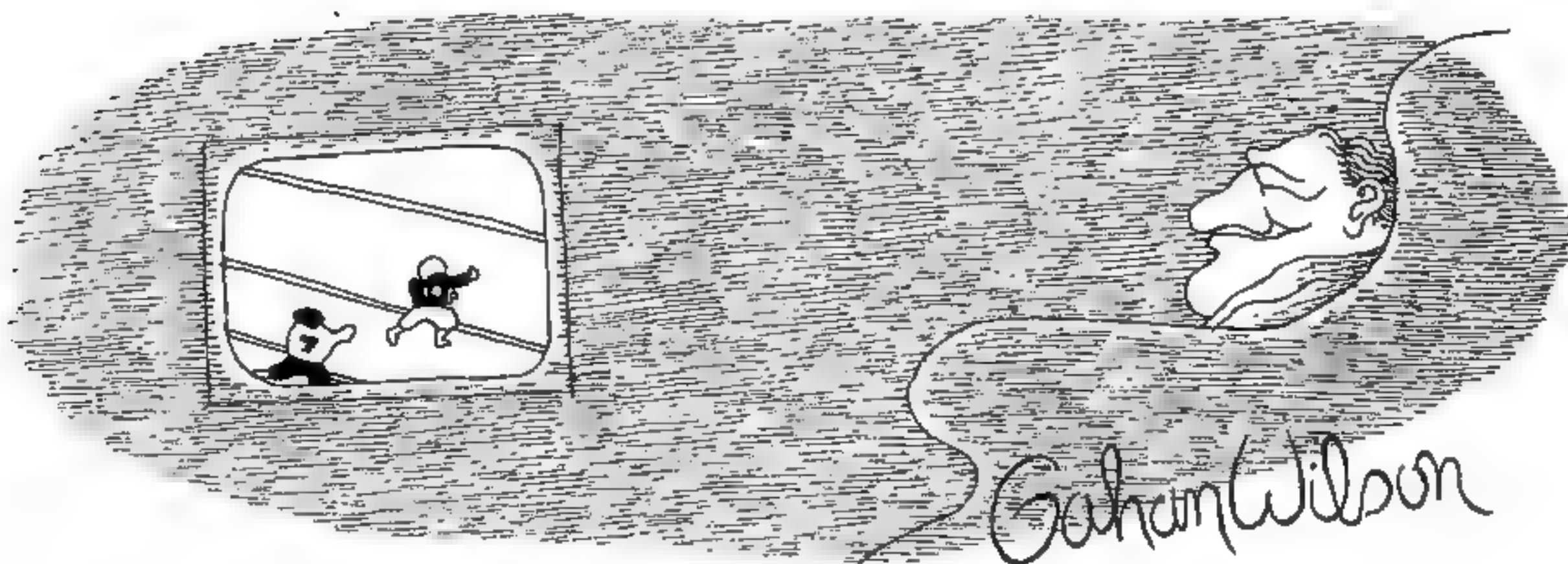
"I've always known R.H. would be able to do that!"



"Well, folks, it looks as if Ole Mich is really getting trounced by those Reds...."



"Click."



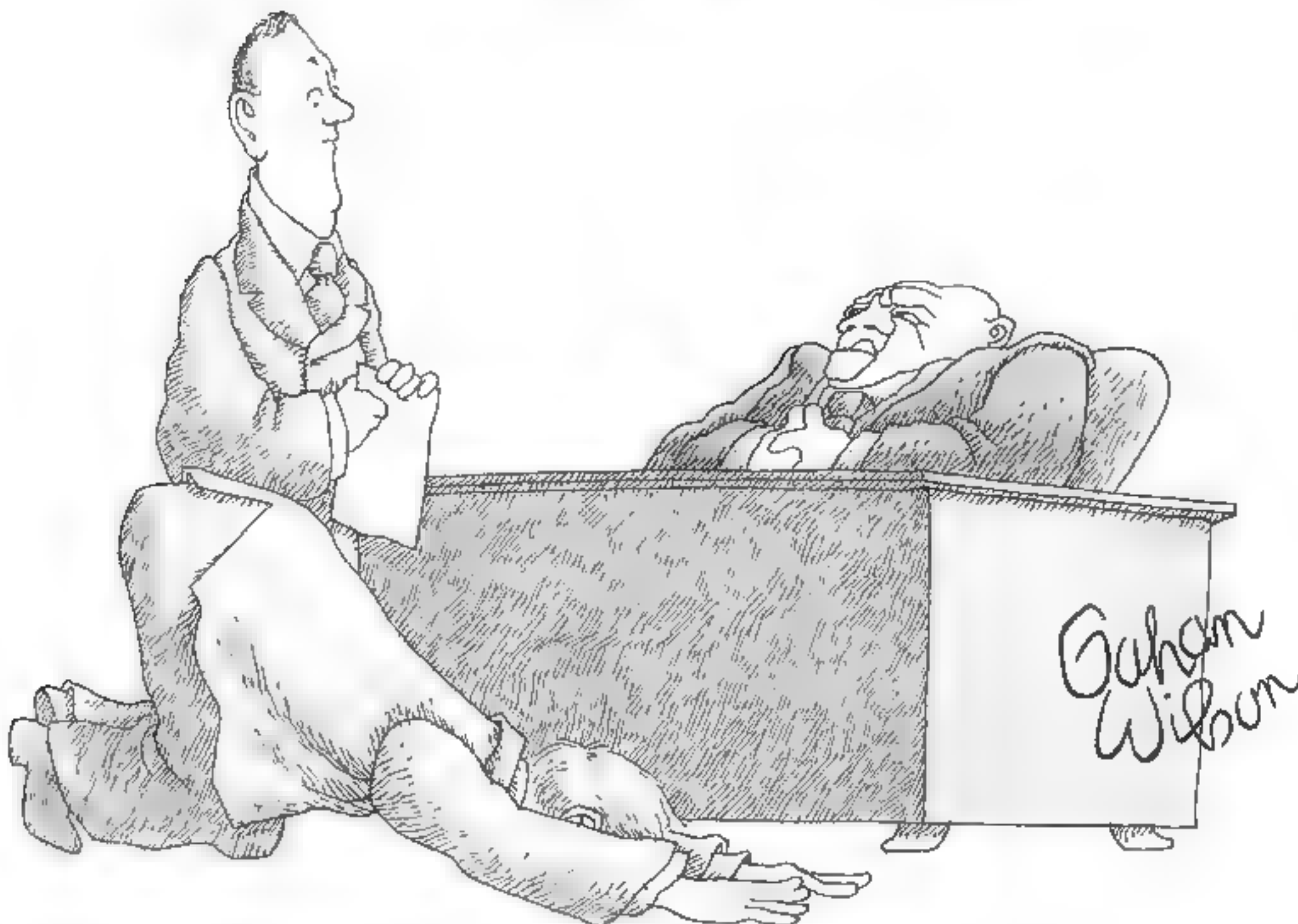
"Well, folks, it looks as if those Reds are really getting trounced by Ole Mich."



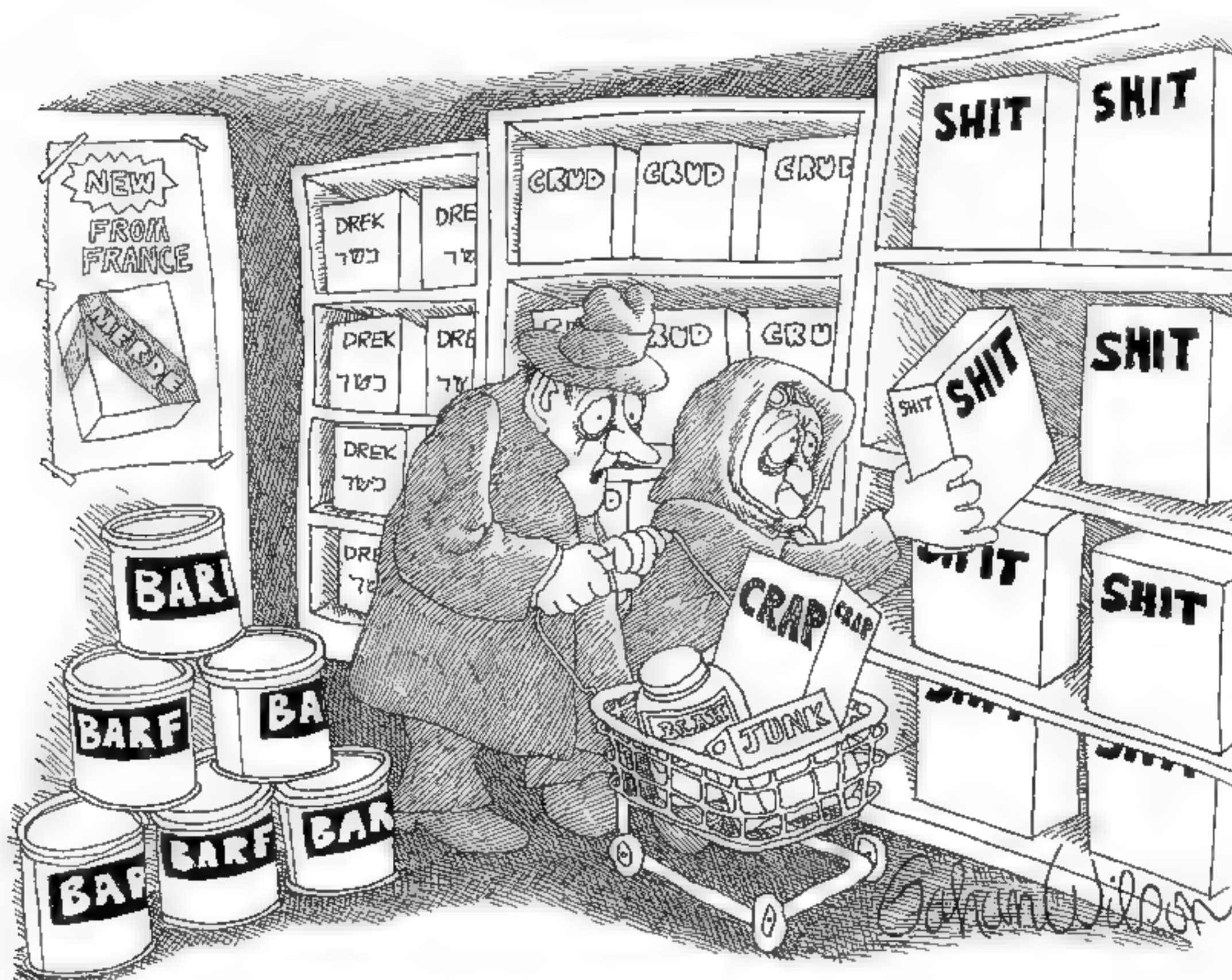
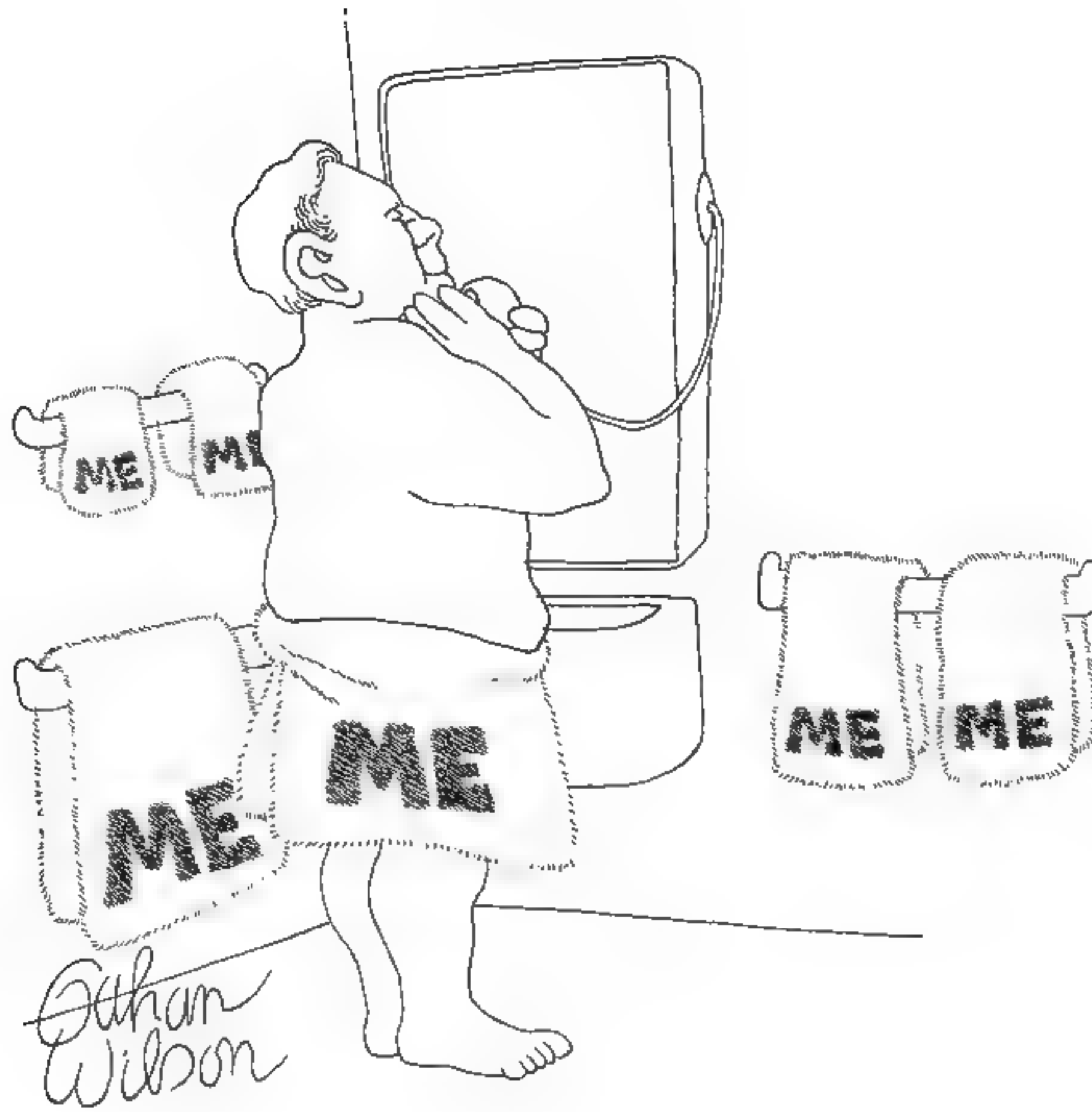
"I'm just not sure the general public is ready for this, Foster."



"Bring in another!"



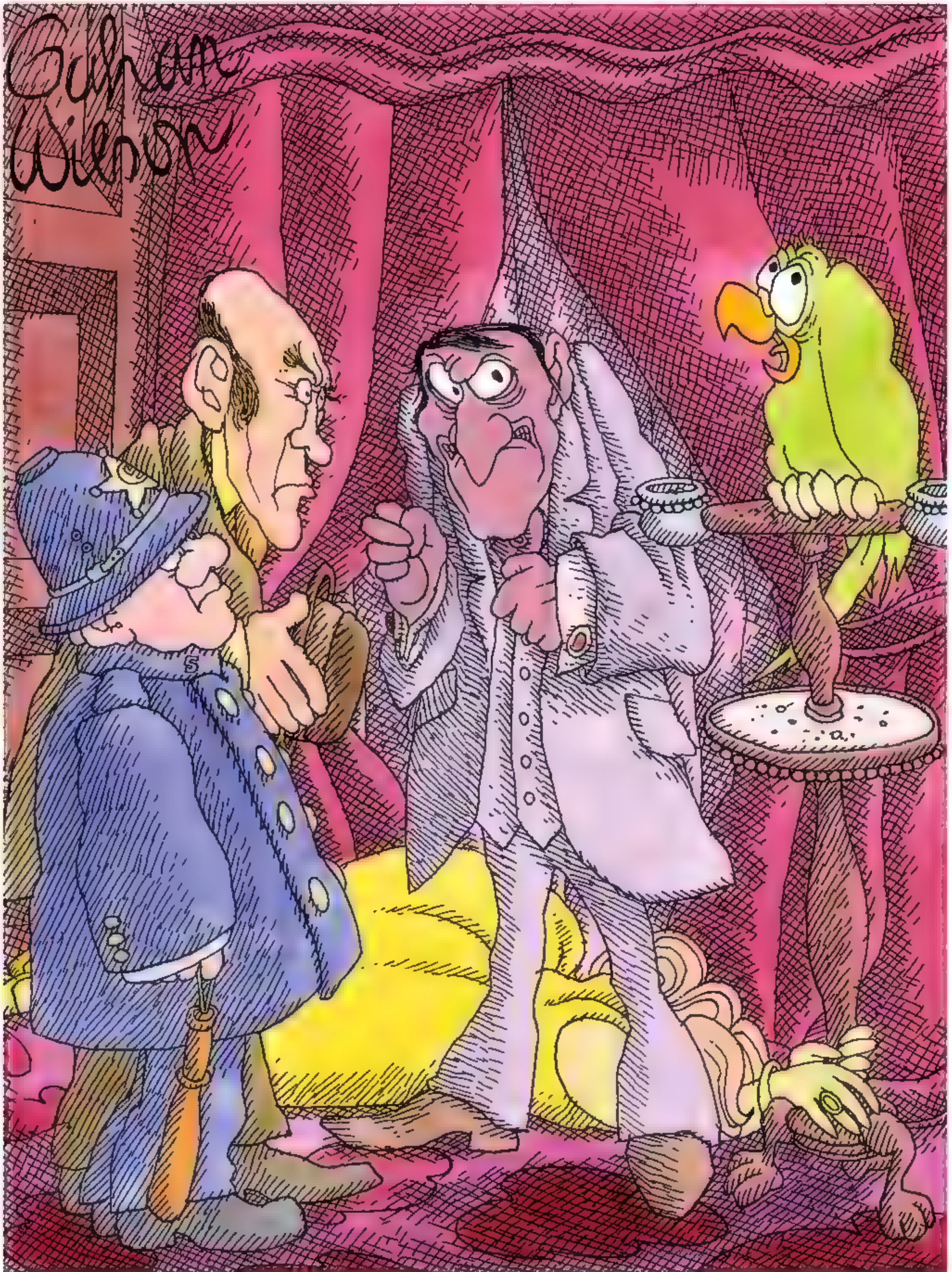
"You could learn a thing or two from Harrington, here, Wiltz."



"And every day it's costing more and more!"



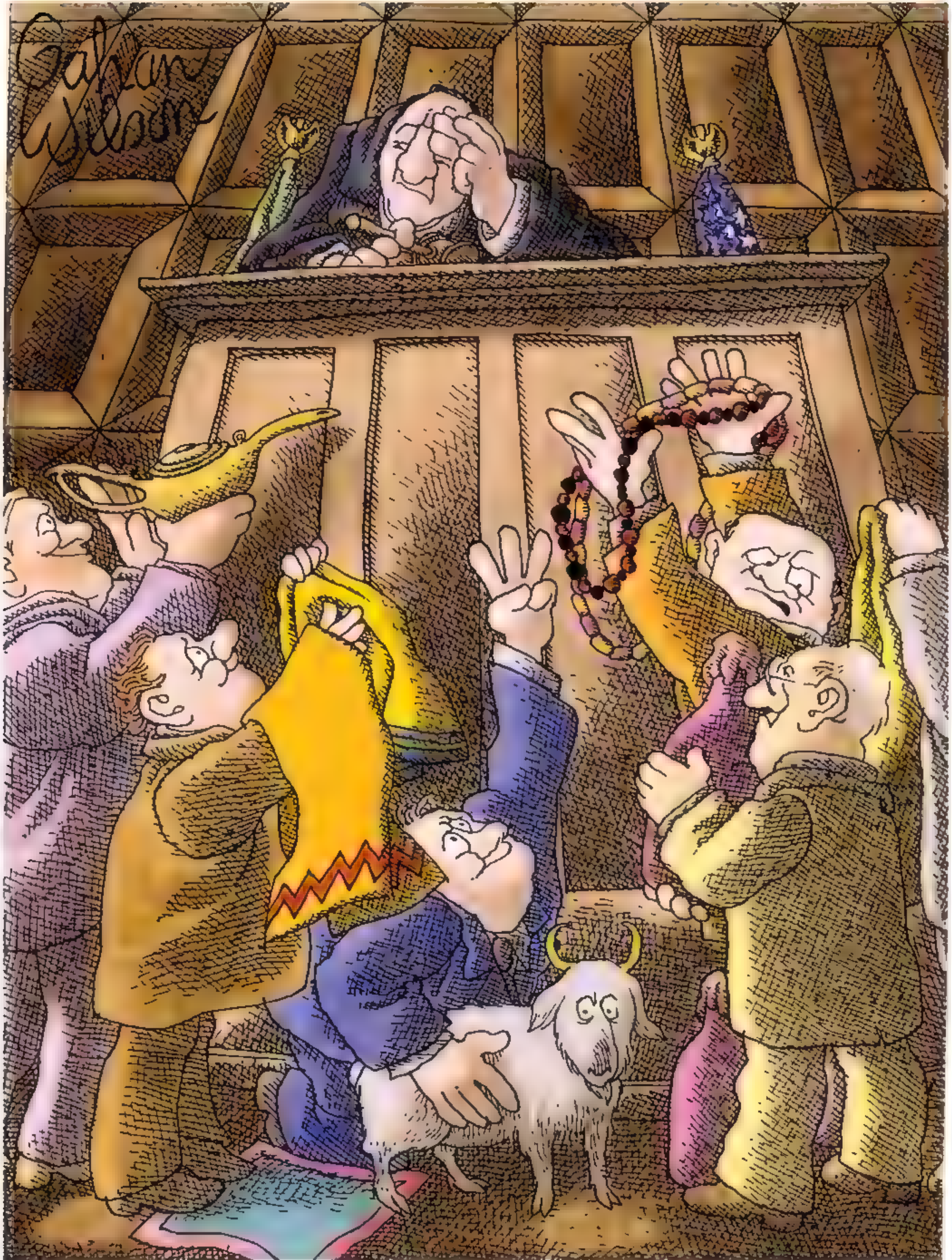
"You stop it, now!"



"I'm going to kill you, Jenny Sue! Ha, ha, ha! Yes, I, Roger Z. Gramble, am going to kill you! 'No, no—don't!' 'Get ready, Jenny! Ha, ha, ha!' 'No, Roger—don't kill me!' 'Ha, ha, ha!' 'No, Roger!'..."



"Gee, Harriet, you are the kinkiest!"



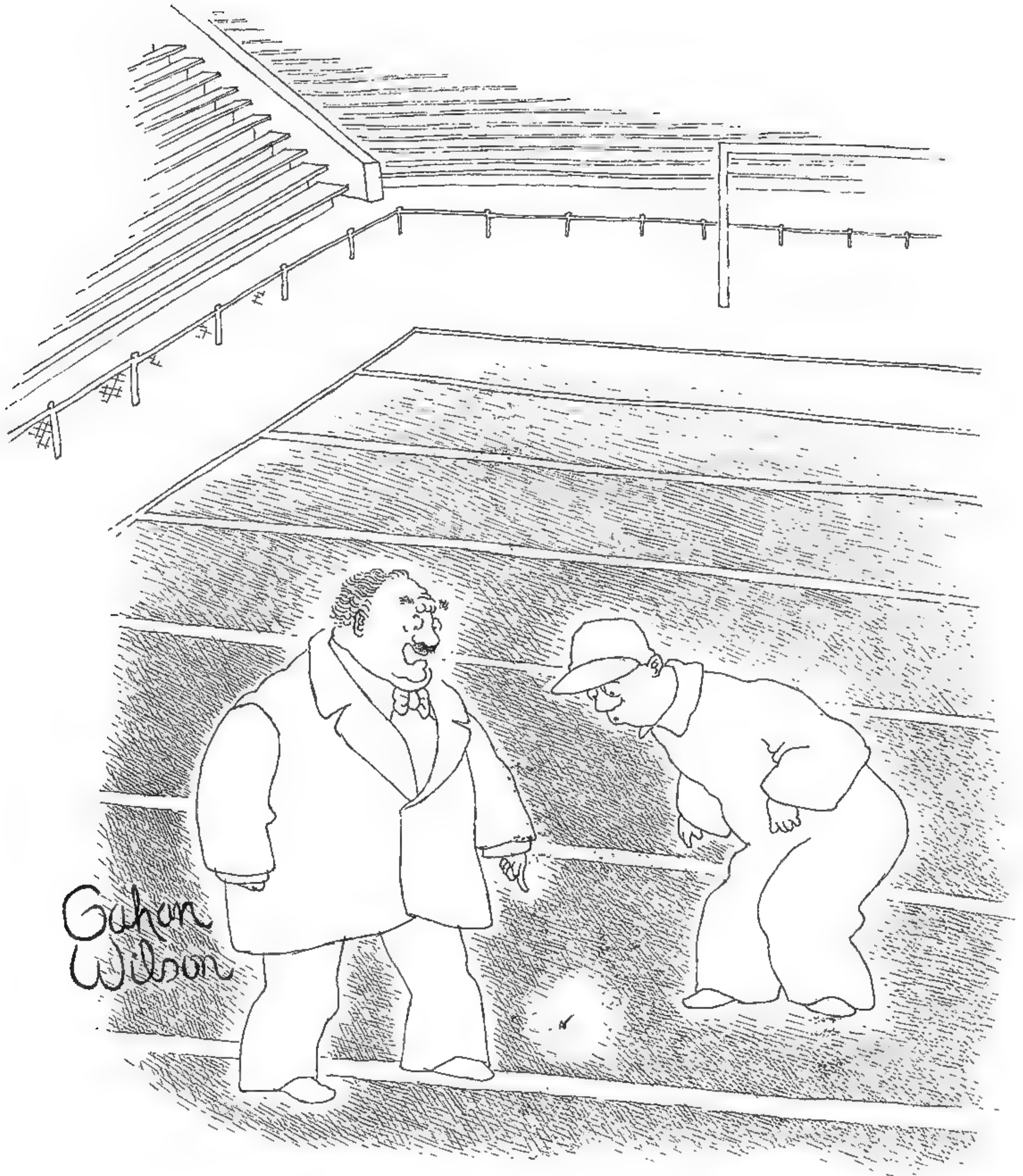
"This plea bargaining has really gotten out of hand!"



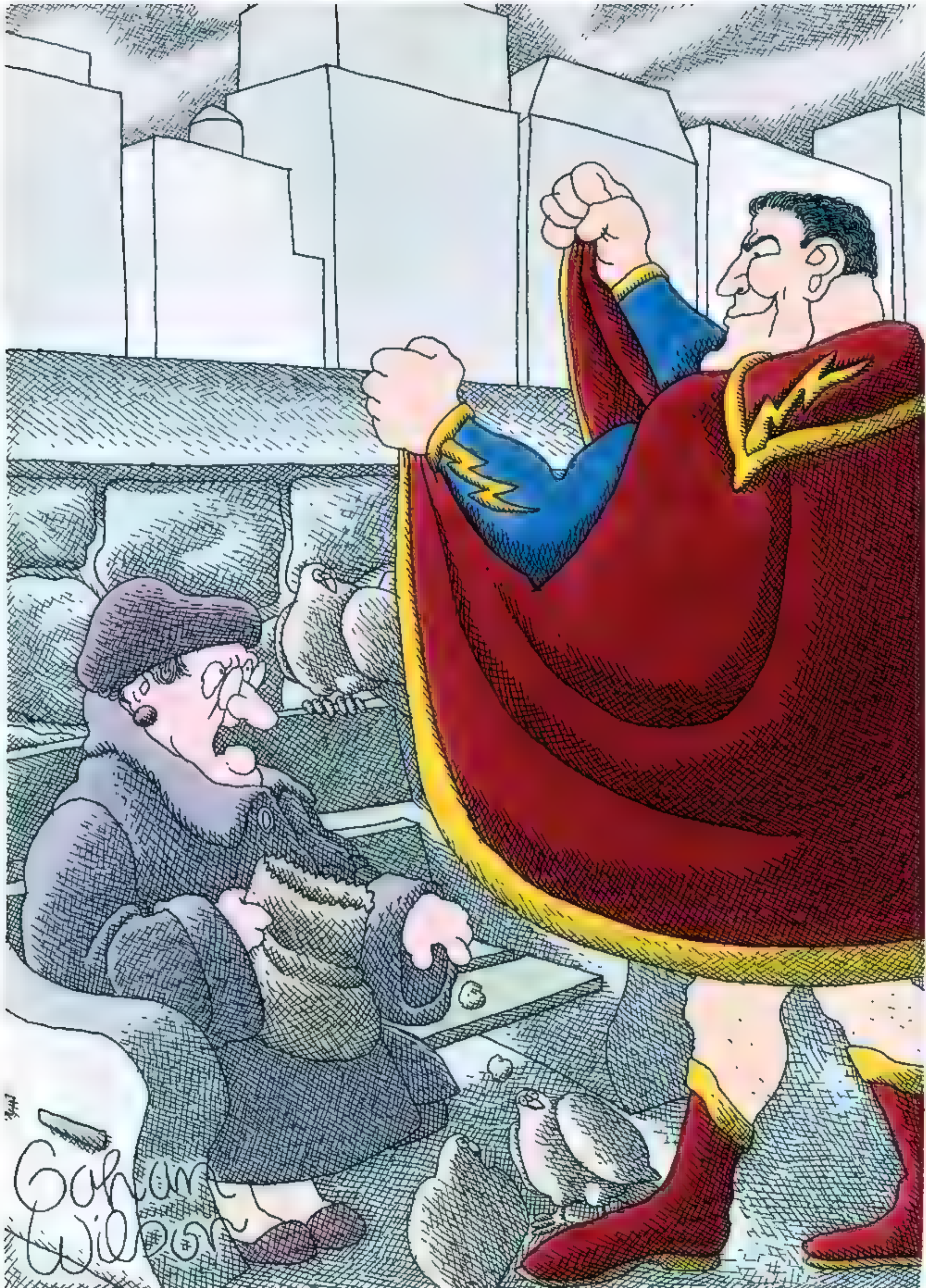
"Damn it, I still haven't got you right! Let's try again."



"I wish you'd stop wearing that around the house!"



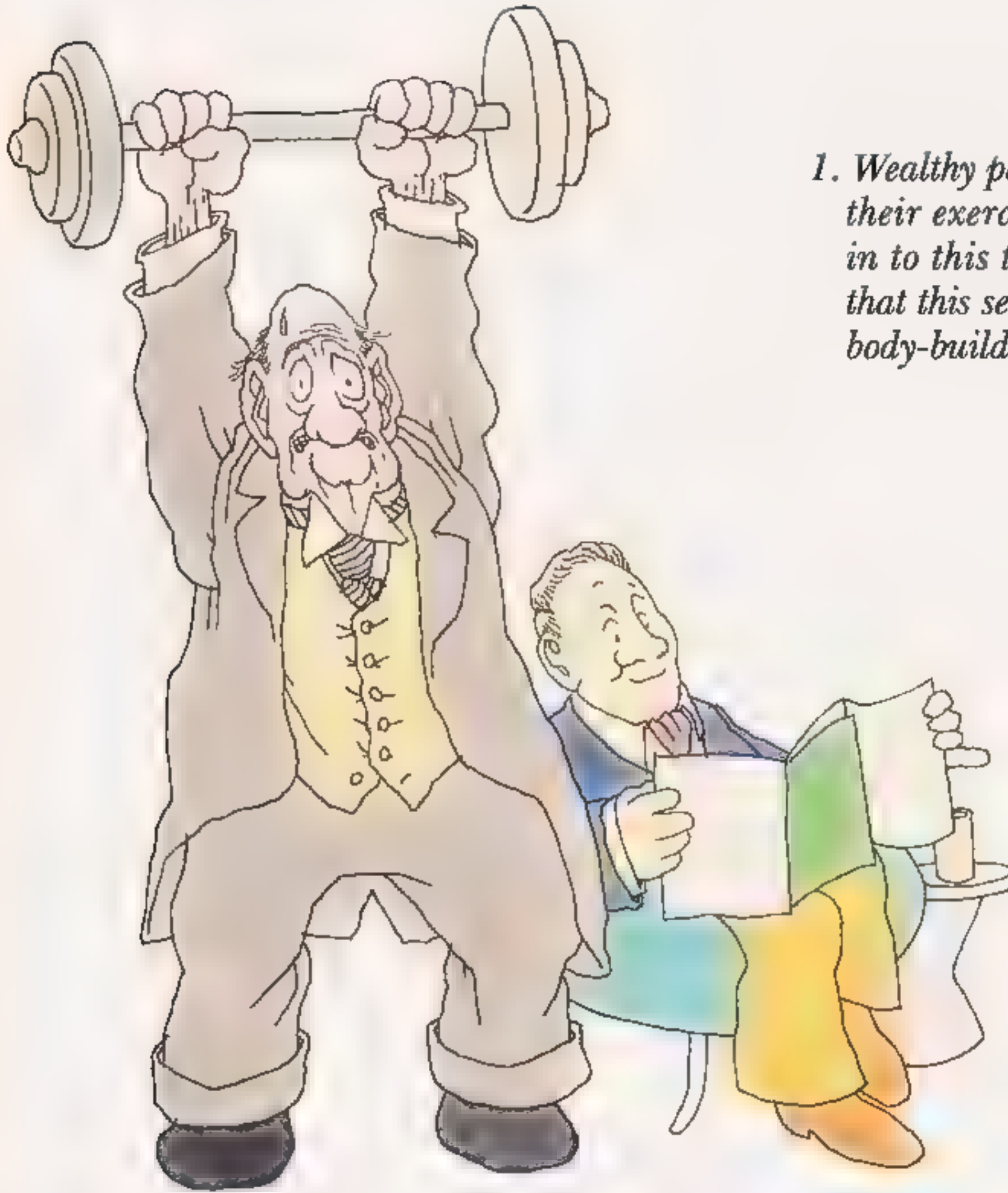
"Something's trying to get through the Astroturf!"



*"Why aren't you out there protecting us
from evildoers, young man?"*

CAUTIONARY CALISTHENICS by Gahan Wilson

Though the obvious dangers of exercise (heavy breathing, sweating) are easily avoided, there are more subtle menaces lurking on the road to robust health; these examples should help you guard against them.



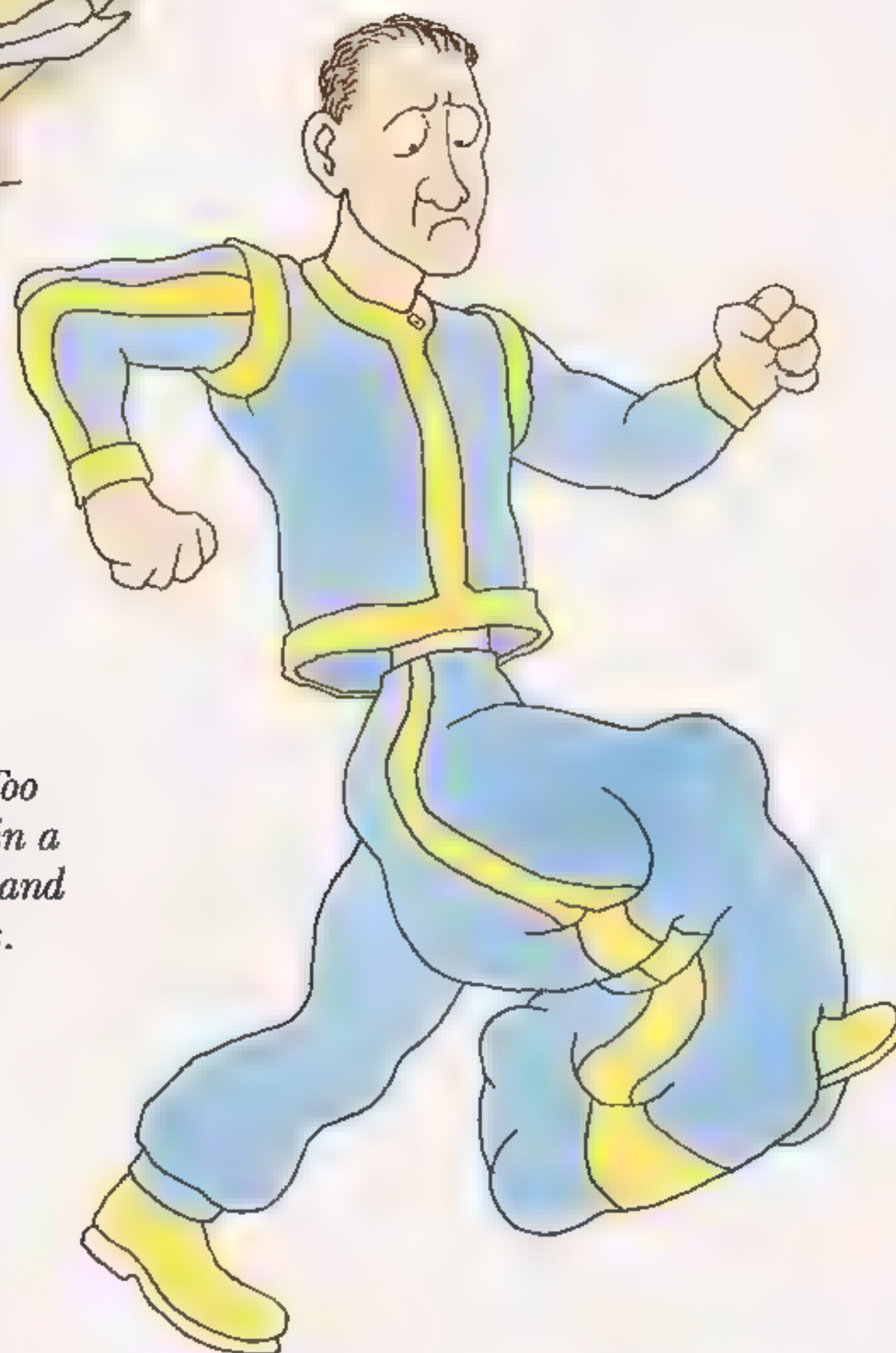
1. Wealthy people will consider hiring others to do their exercise for them. They should not give in to this temptation, as studies have shown that this seriously slows down any truly serious body-building campaign.

2. The key word in isometrics is balance. Be sure every part of your body shares in the fun equally and you will be able to avoid awkward developments.



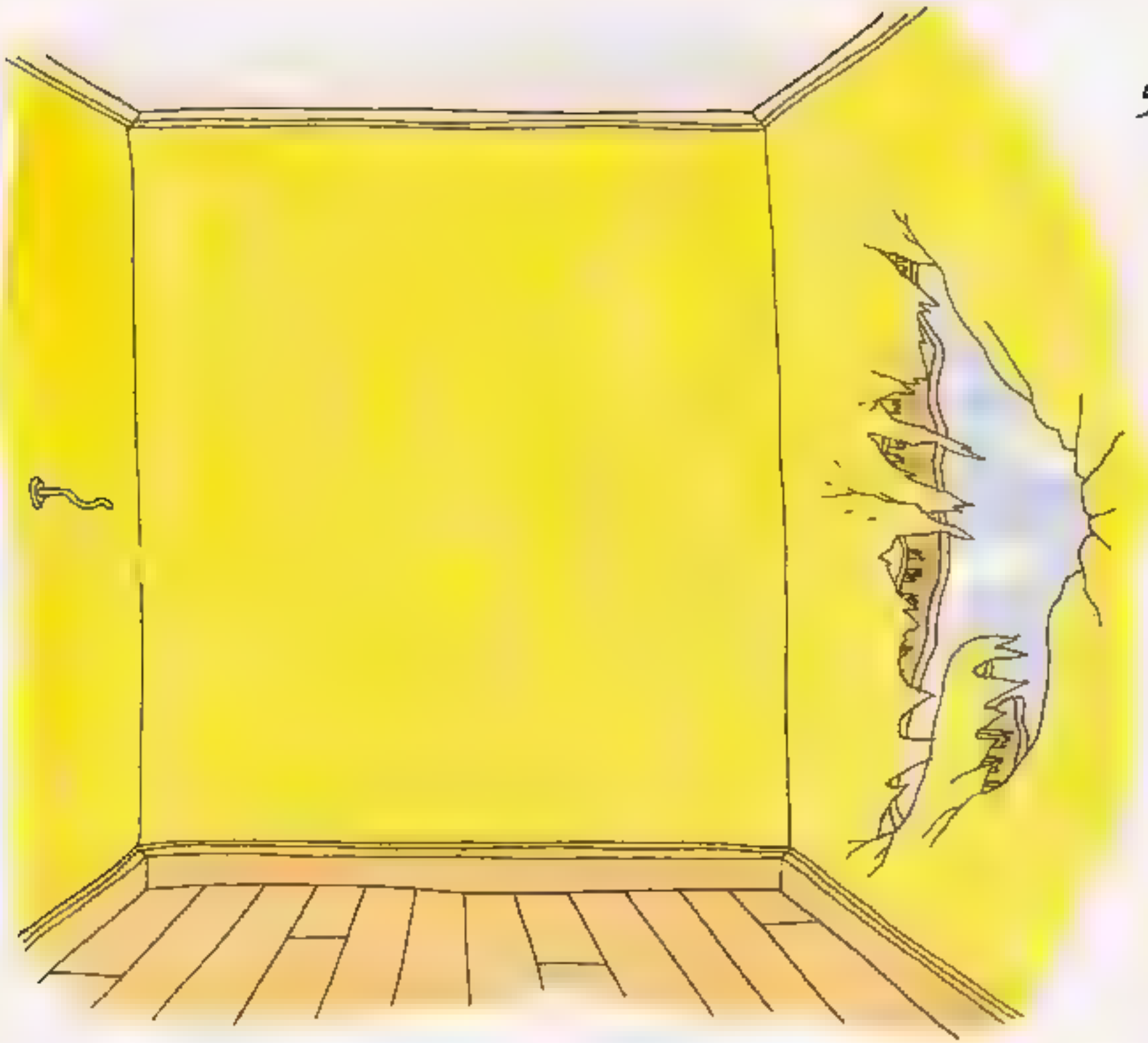


3. Proceed cautiously in the practice of yoga, as mistakes are hard to undo.



4. When jogging, watch your step. Too much steady pounding can result in a loosening of your internal organs and their slippage into one of your legs.

5. Install all equipment carefully.



6. Never increase the weight load of any exercise machine when you are by yourself.



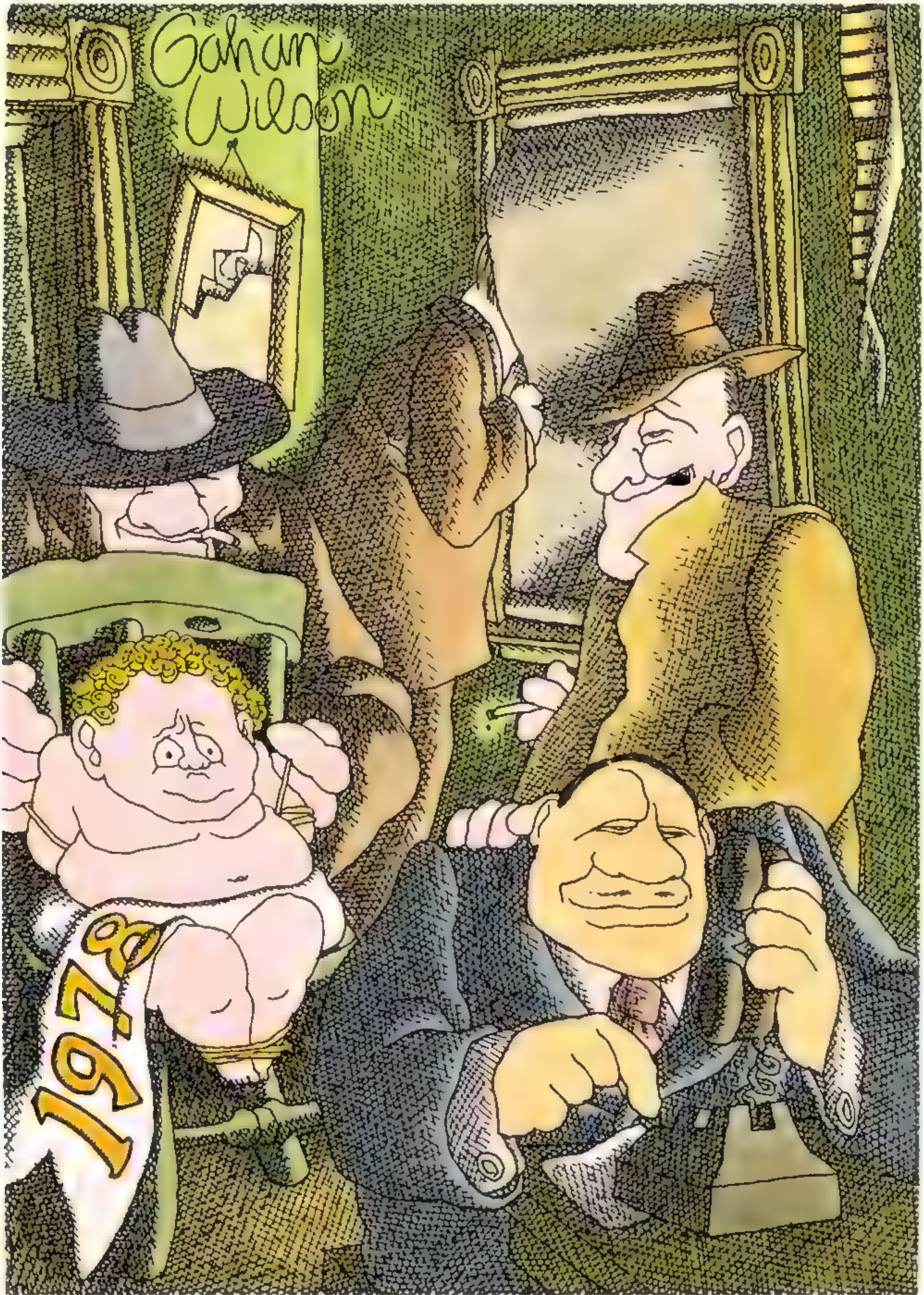


"What the hell is all this?"



"I'VE PASSED YOUR
COMPLAINTS ALONG
TO THE CAPTAIN."

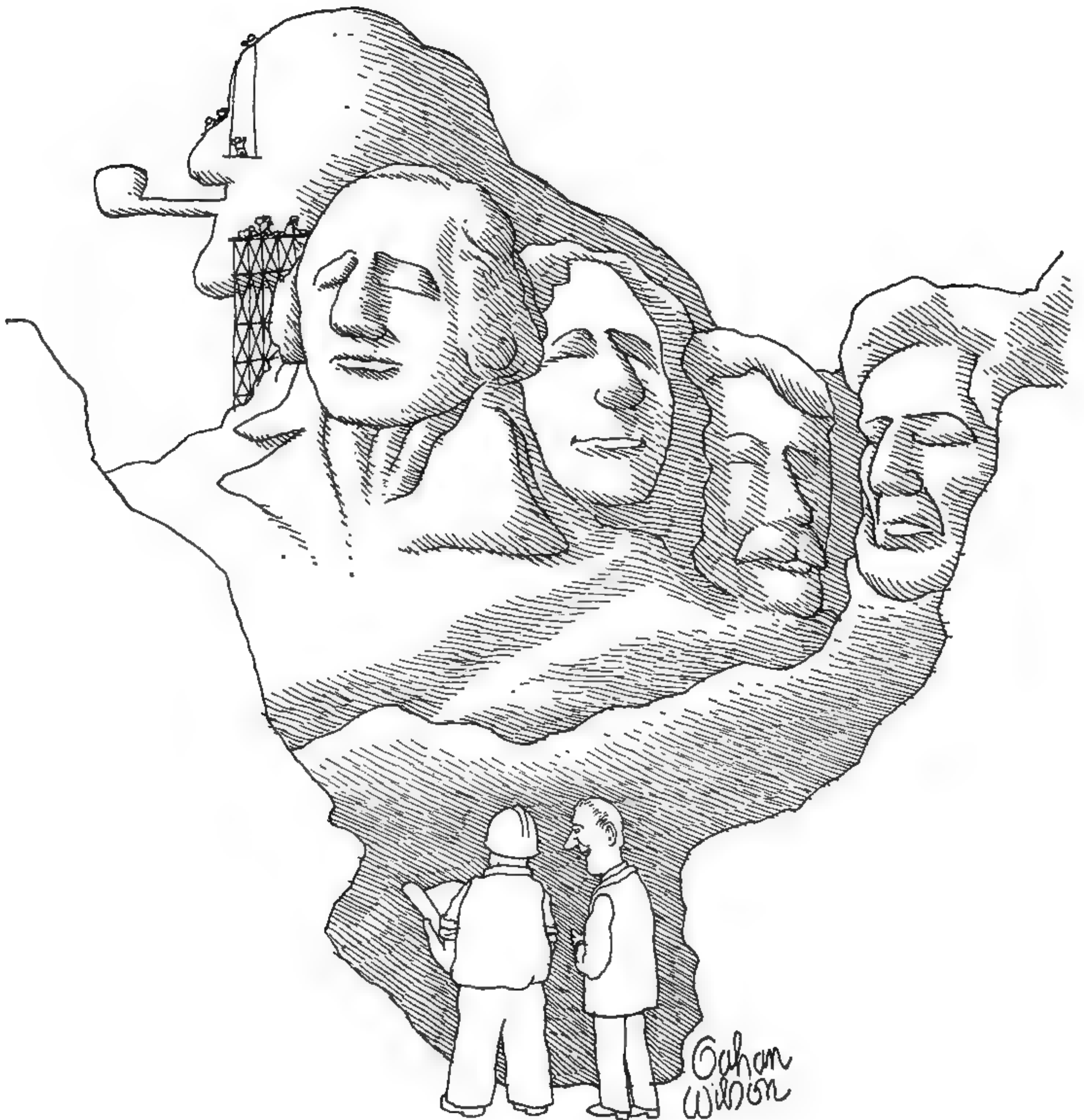




"I really got to hand it to you, Danny!"



*"It's the kind of trade you get in a
twenty-four-hour-a-day joint."*

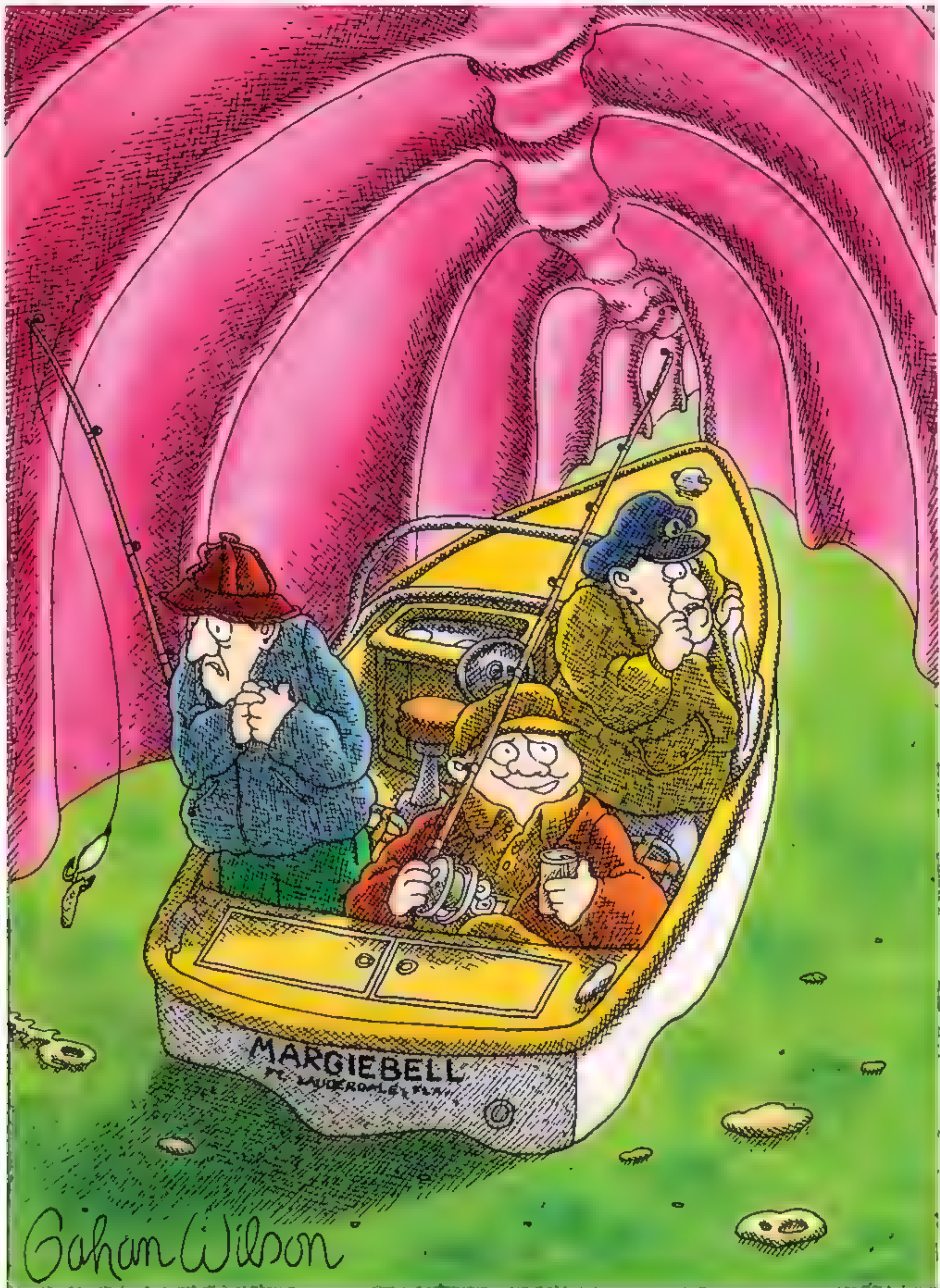


*"Anyhow, Mr. Hefner would like you folks to know
he really appreciates the gesture!"*



"Of course, their programing's not aimed at us!"

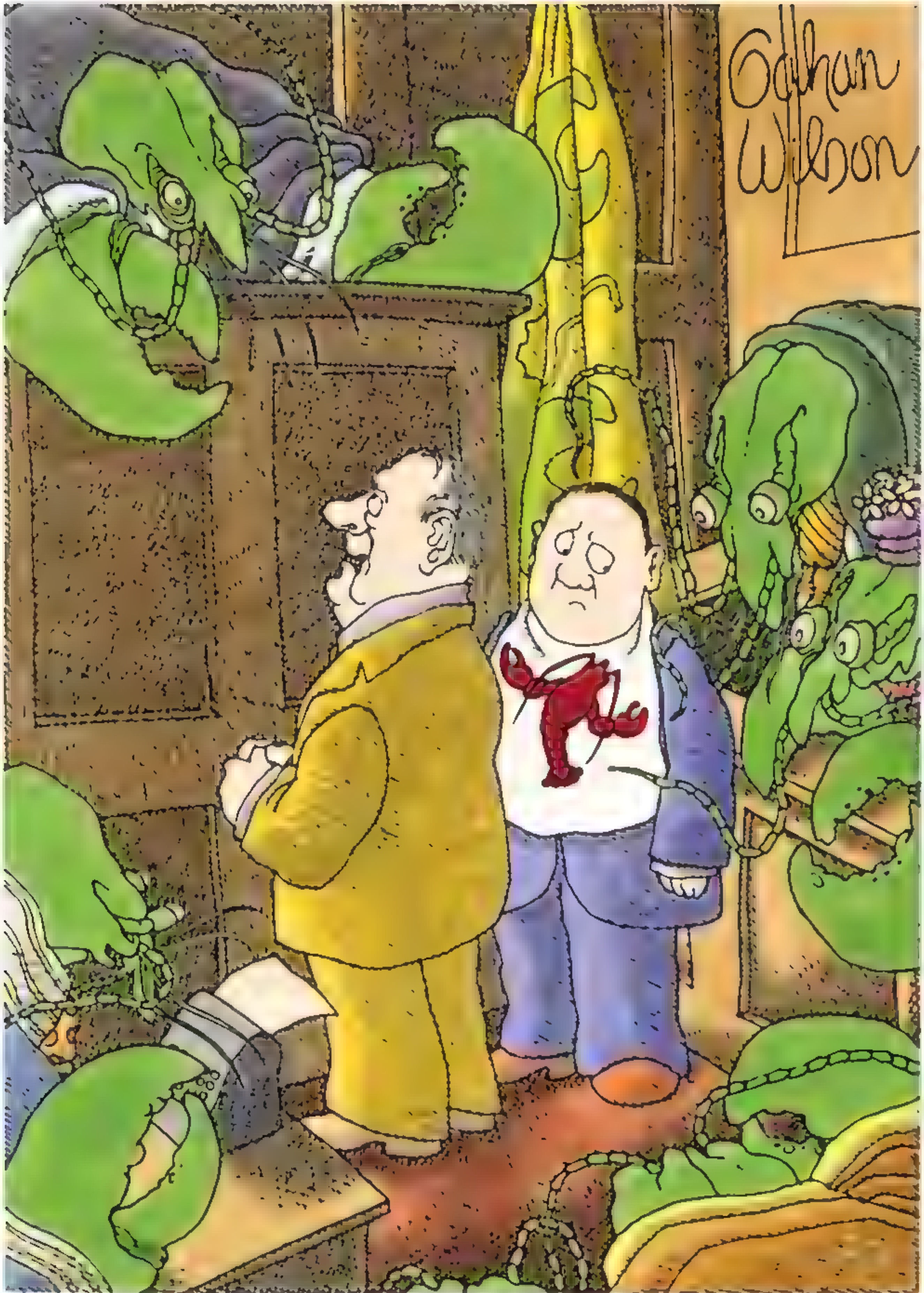




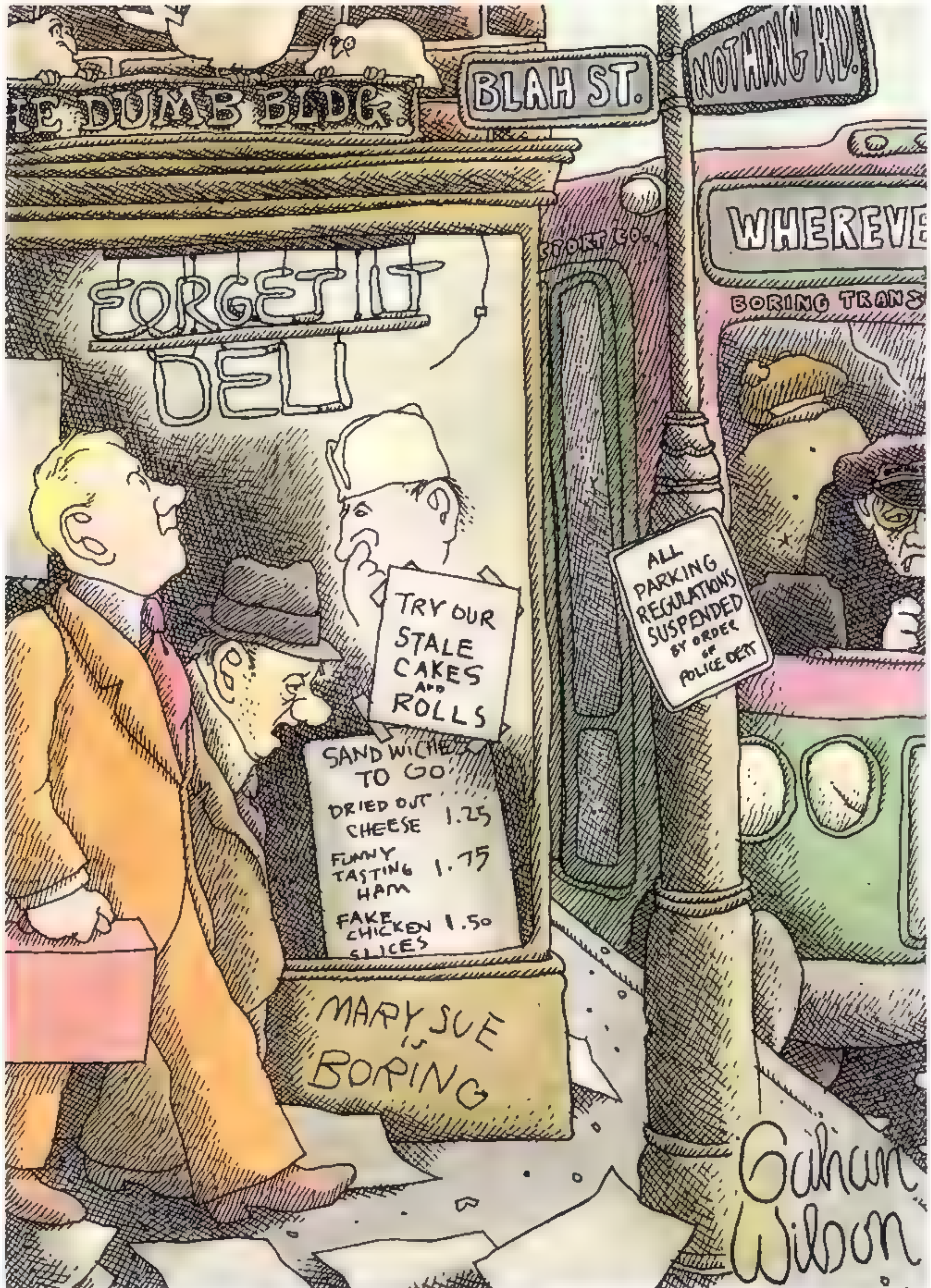
*"Still, you've got to admit our being swallowed
by a fish has its humorous aspects!"*



"I've passed your complaints along to the captain."



*"Your Honor, the defense contends its client could
never get a fair trial in this court."*



*"Somehow, somewhere along the line,
this town lost its pride."*



*"It's the kind of trade you get at an
all-night supermarket, kid."*



"Don't be a stranger, now that you know the way!"



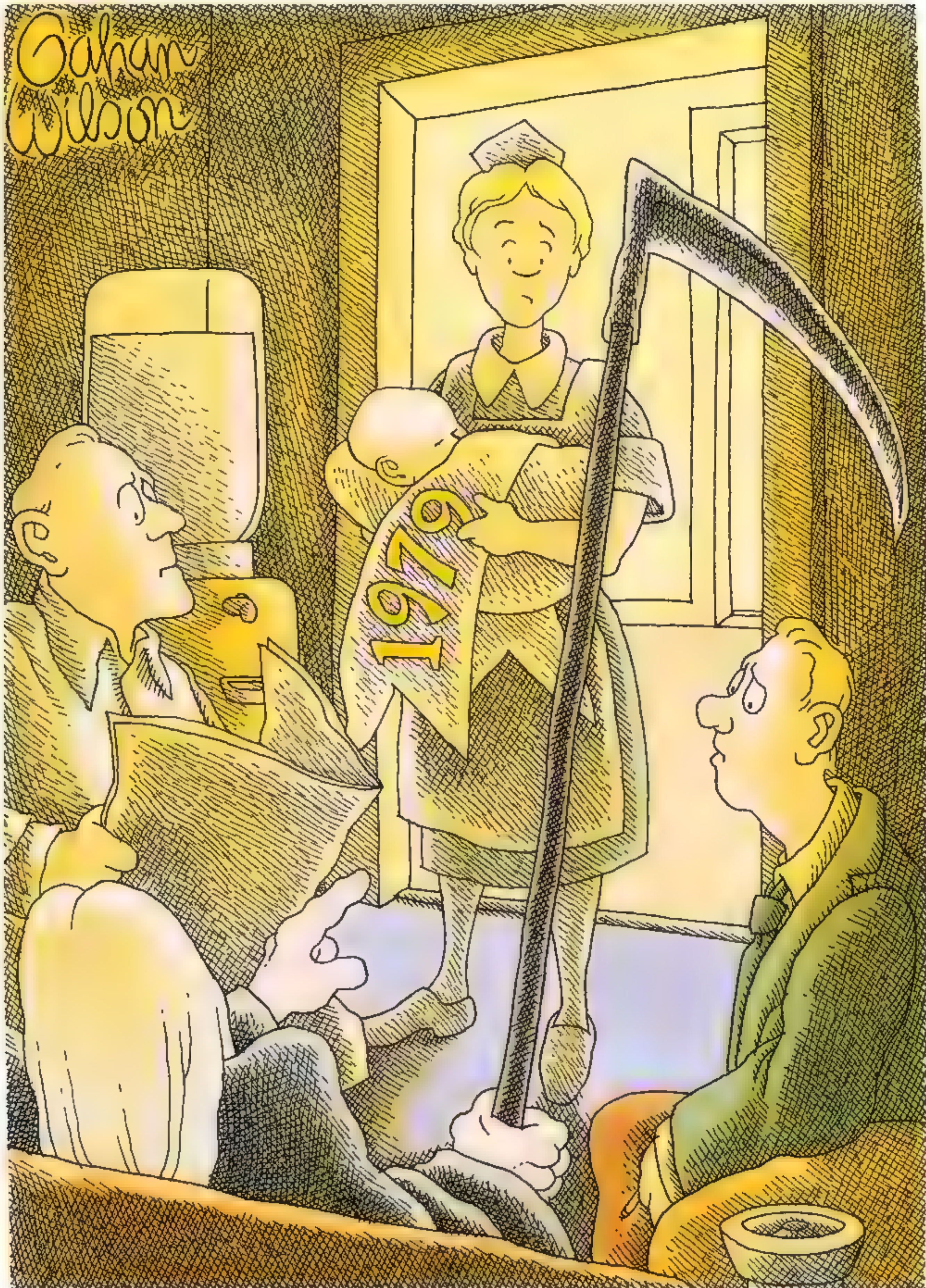
Graham Wilson



"I don't want to leave anyone or anything a goddamn cent!"



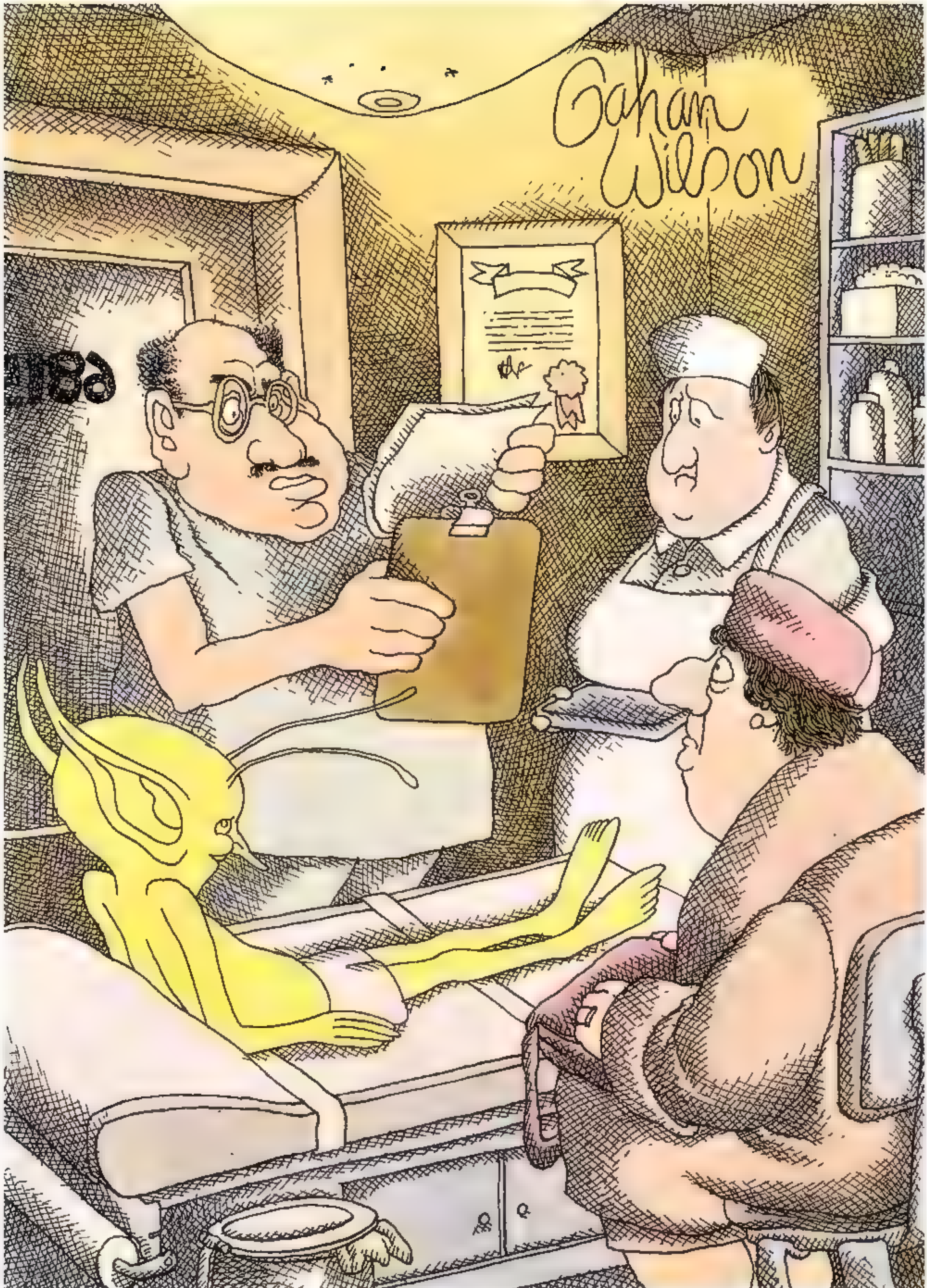
*"Give me the number of the Snappy Pop
Bang Cereal Company, please!"*



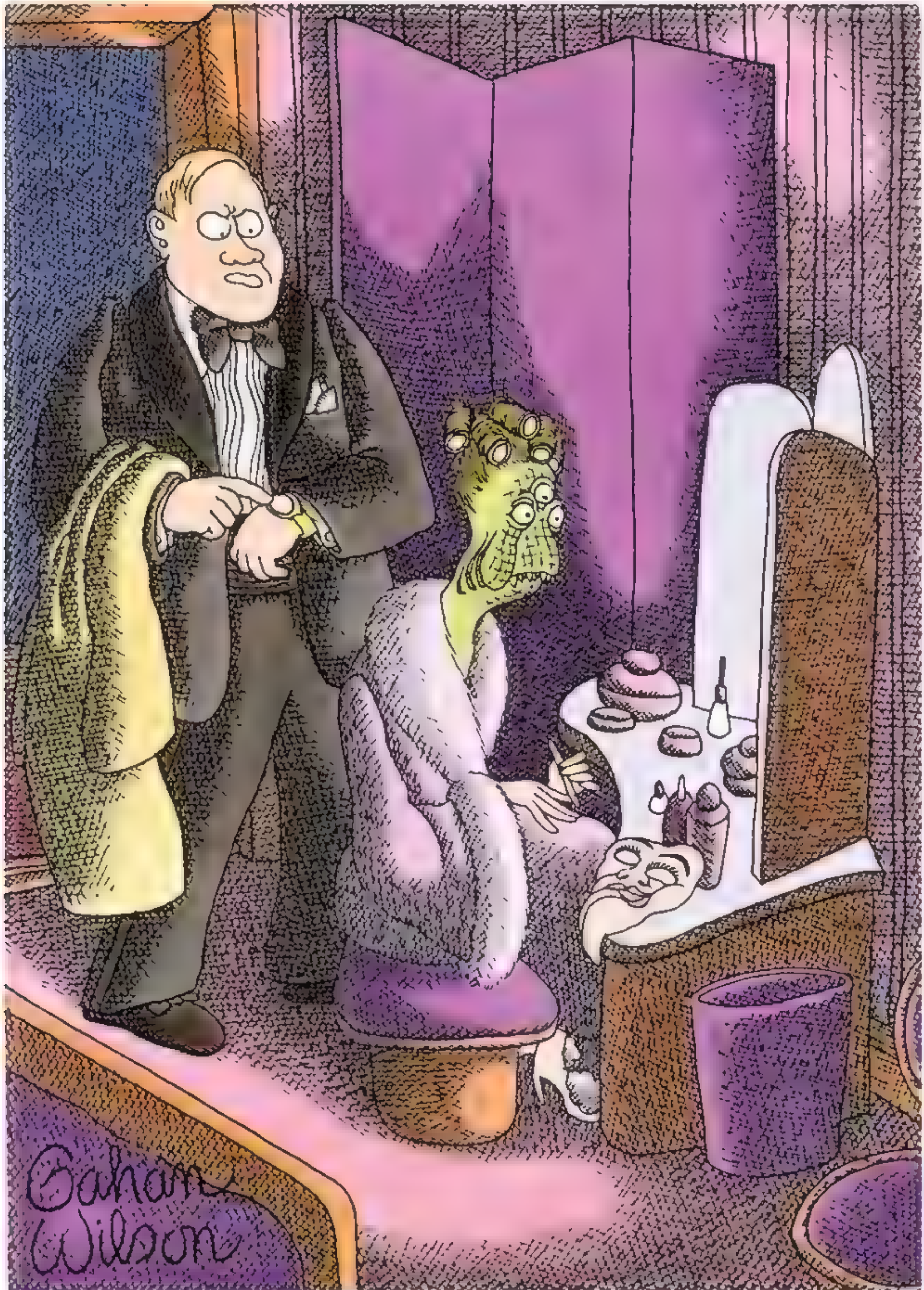
"That will be mine."



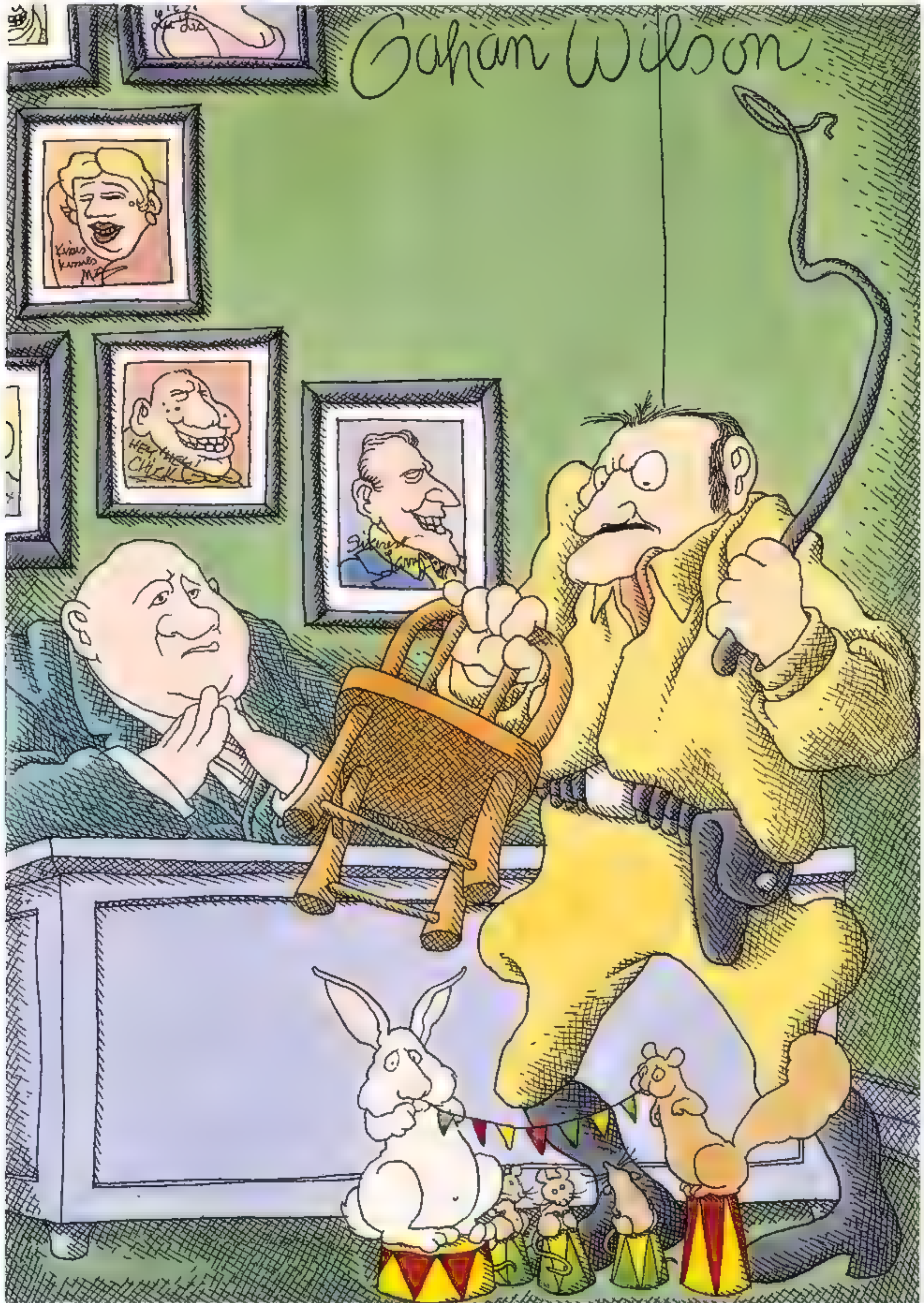
*"I just don't know what we'd have done without
our subscription these past 25 years."*



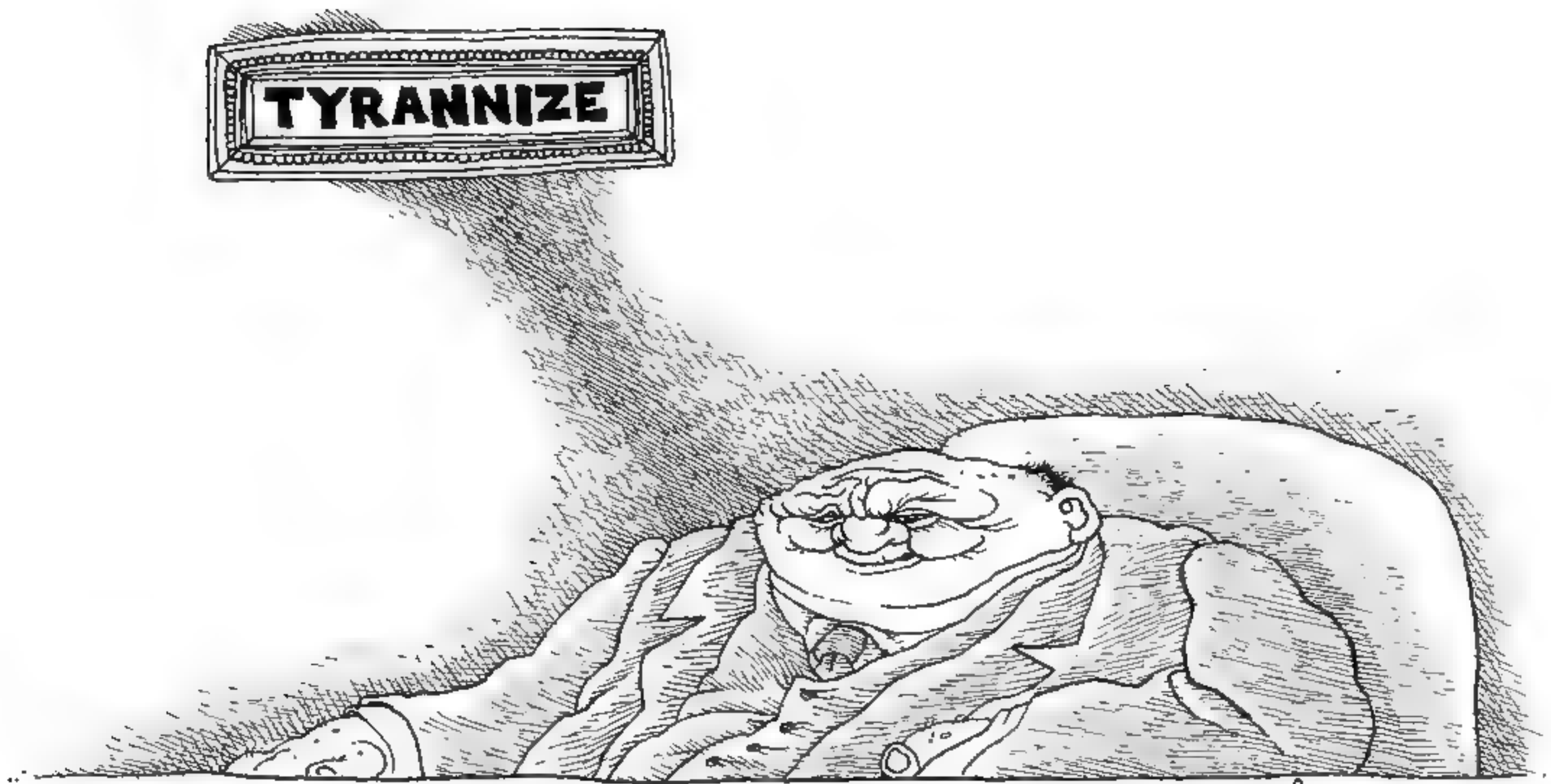
"I'm sorry, Mrs. Smith, but our tests show your child is a changeling left by the fairies."



"You mean to say you haven't even put your face on yet?"



"It's new all right, but it's not very exciting."



Graham
Wilson



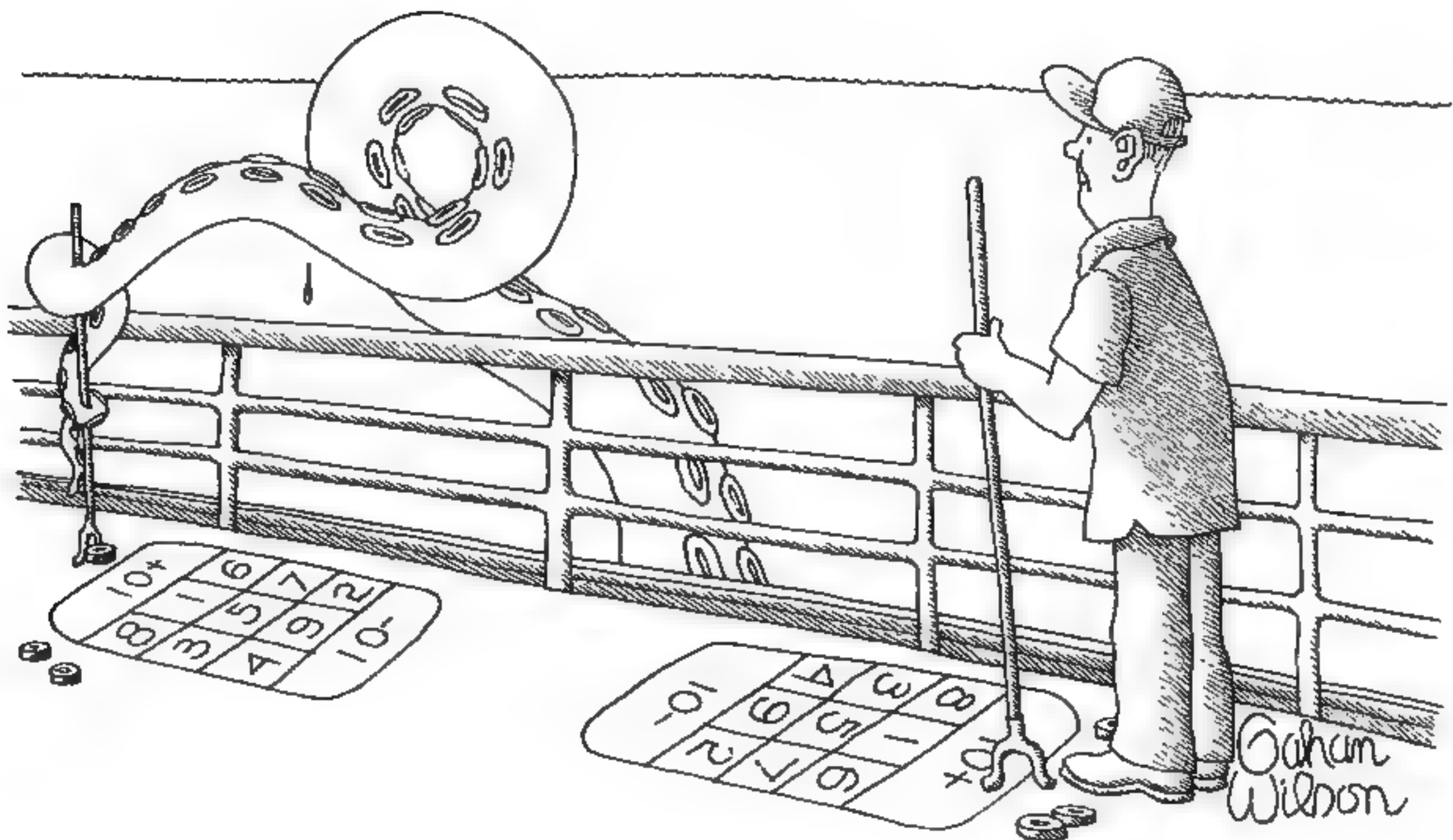
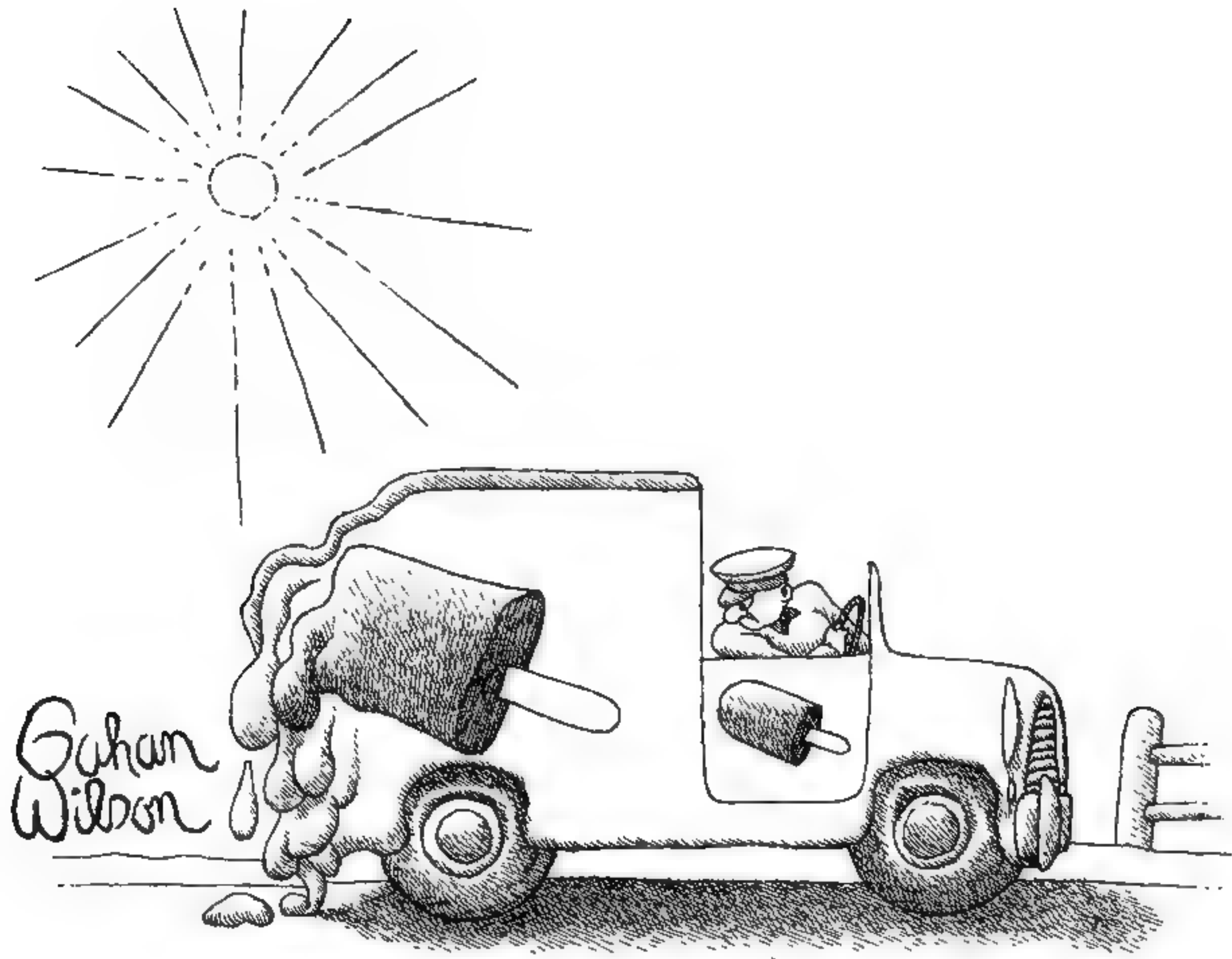
"How come there's no exit?"

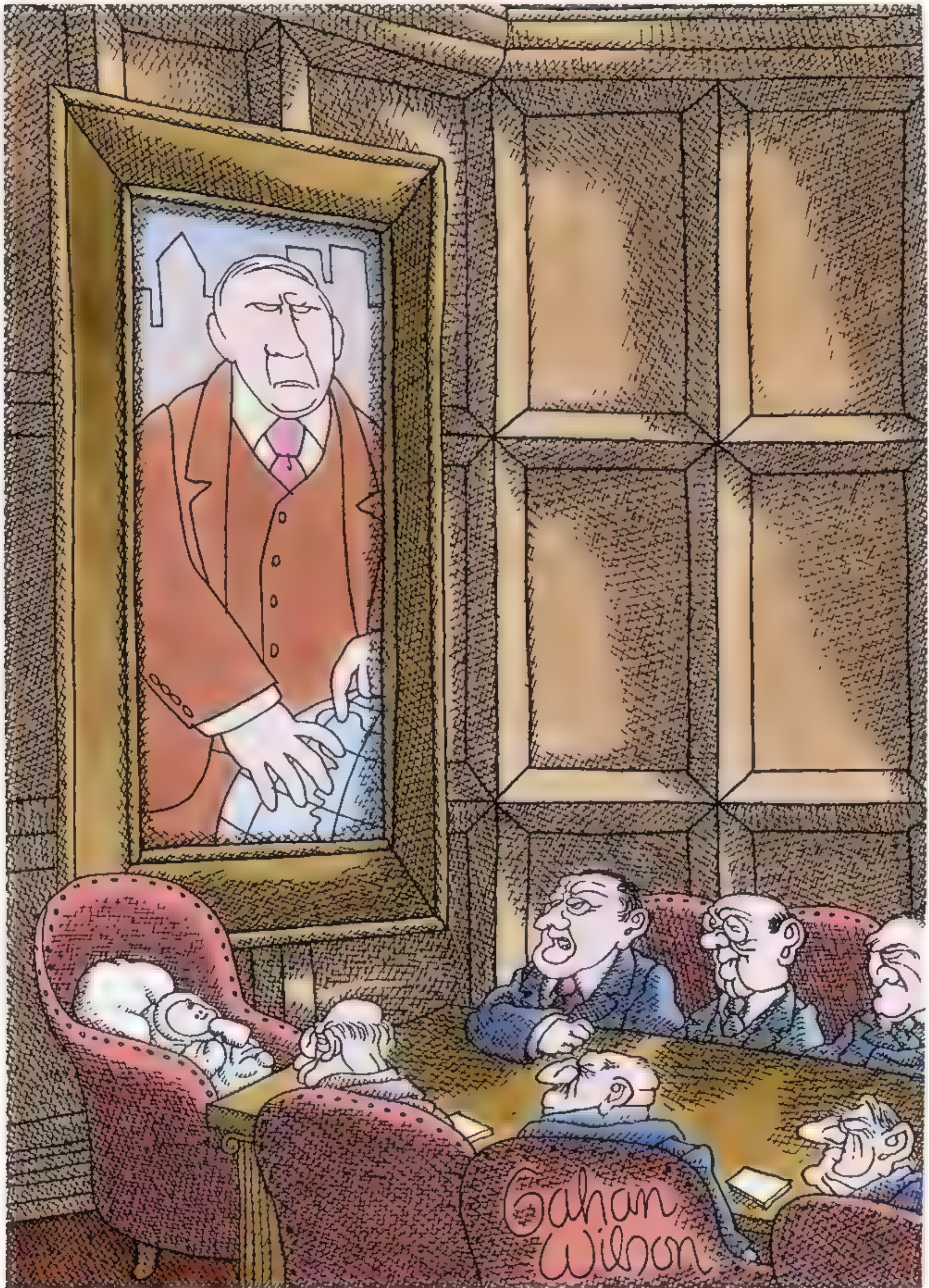


"You're not thinking intergalactic, Olson!"

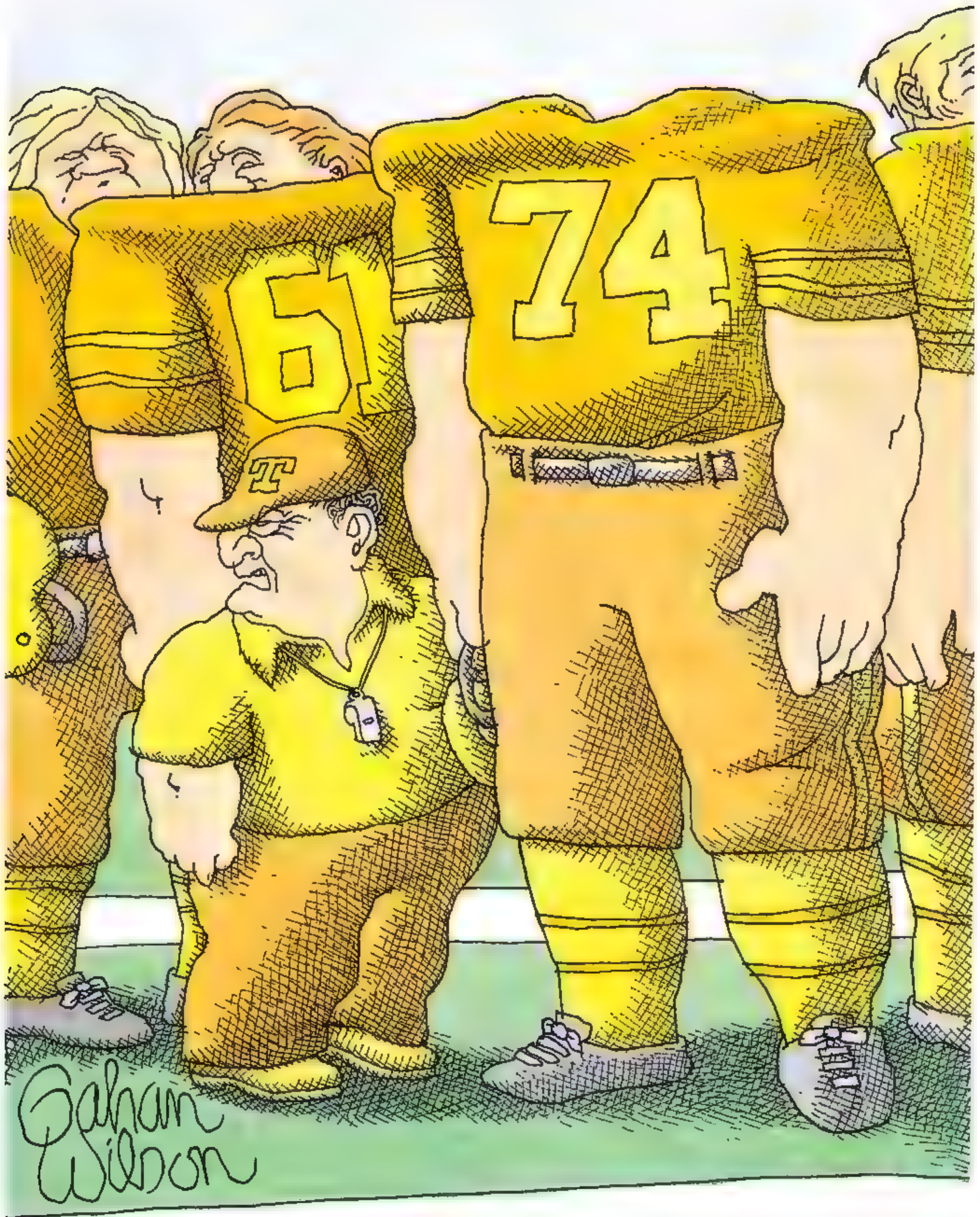


"Fetch!"

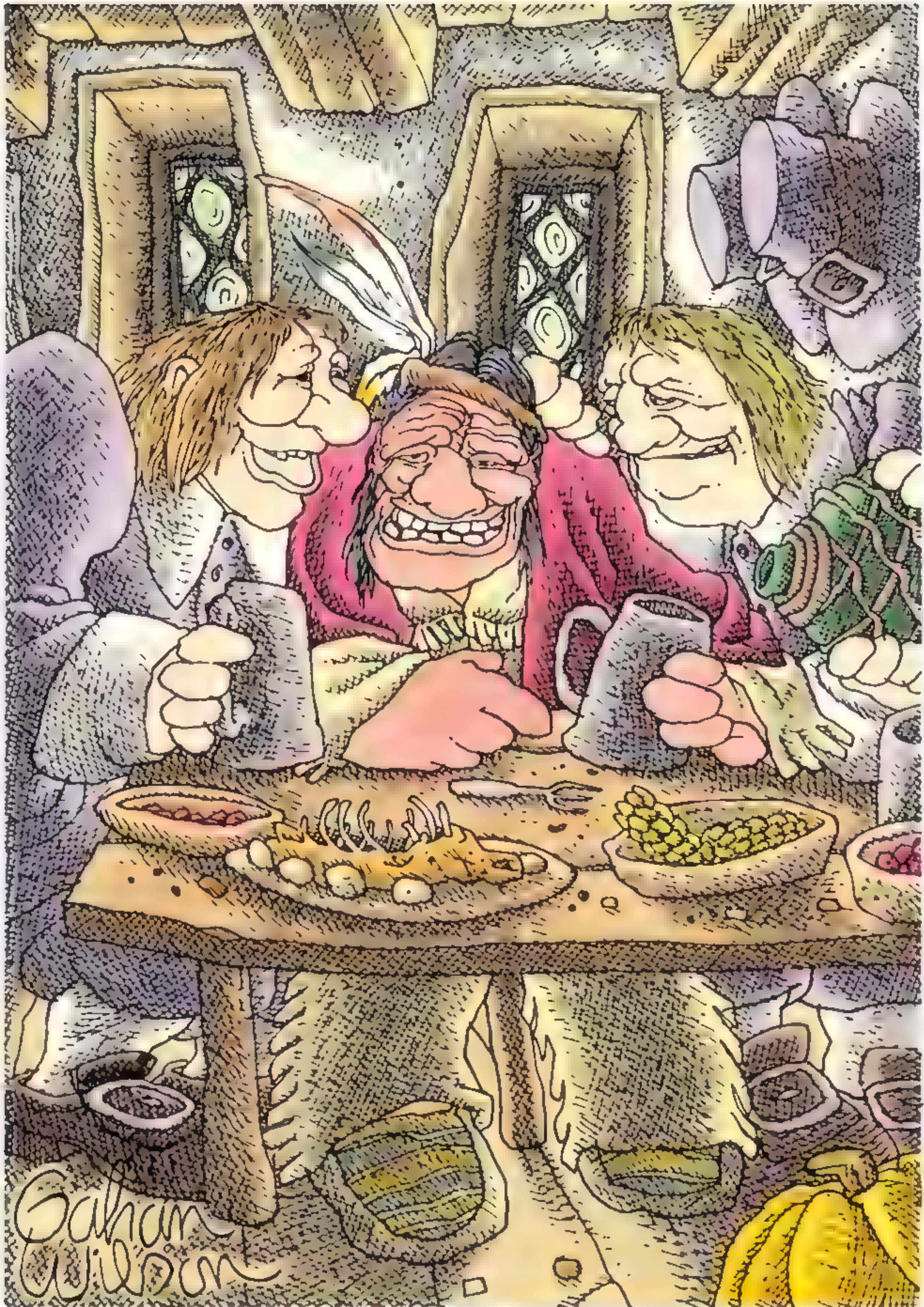




"We're just going to have to be patient, gentlemen."



"Anyone here seen Swazee's head?"

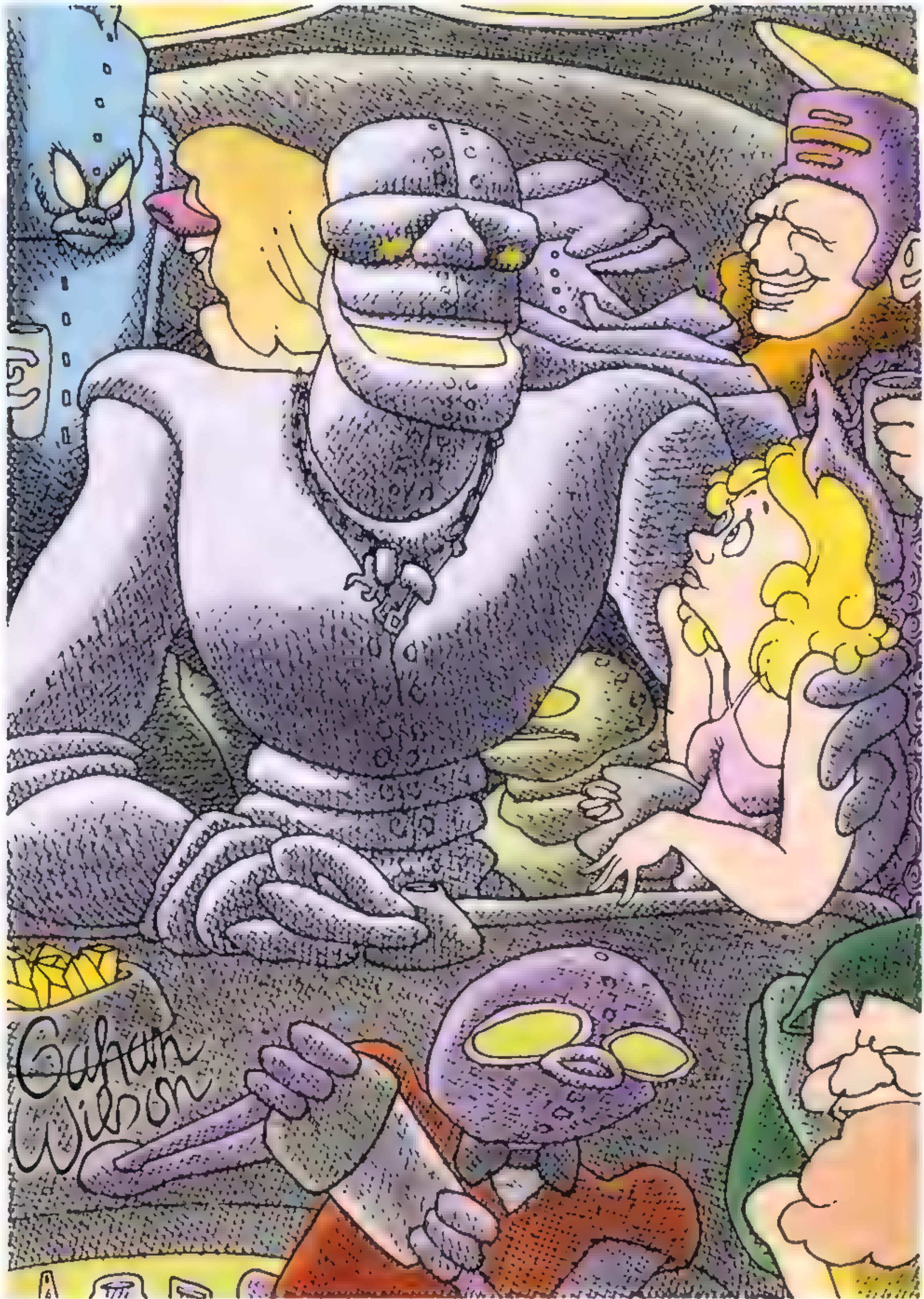


"What do you say we give Chief Wapapatame here another of those Thanksgiving punches before talking over that little land deal?"





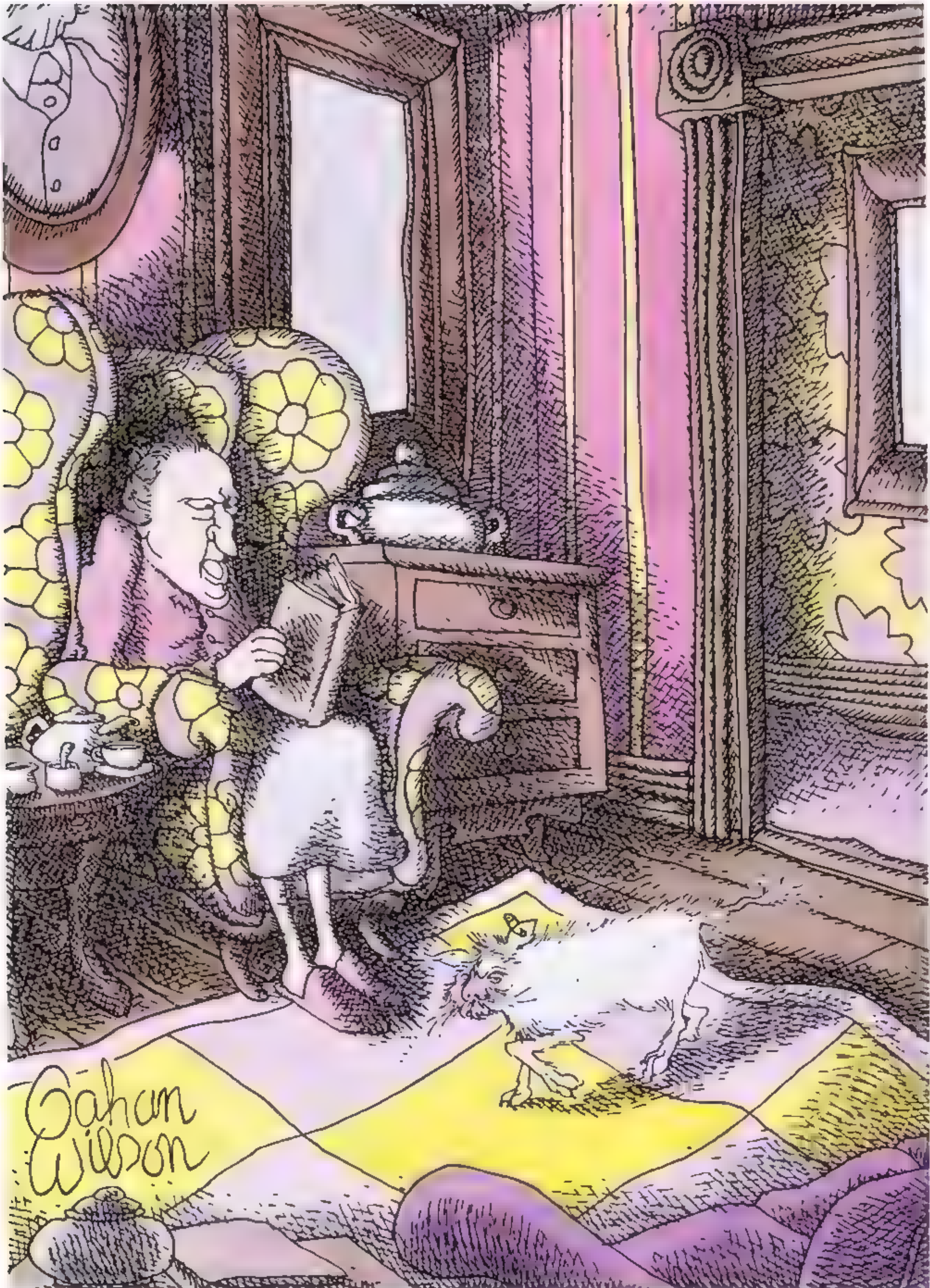
"Obviously, someone screwed up."



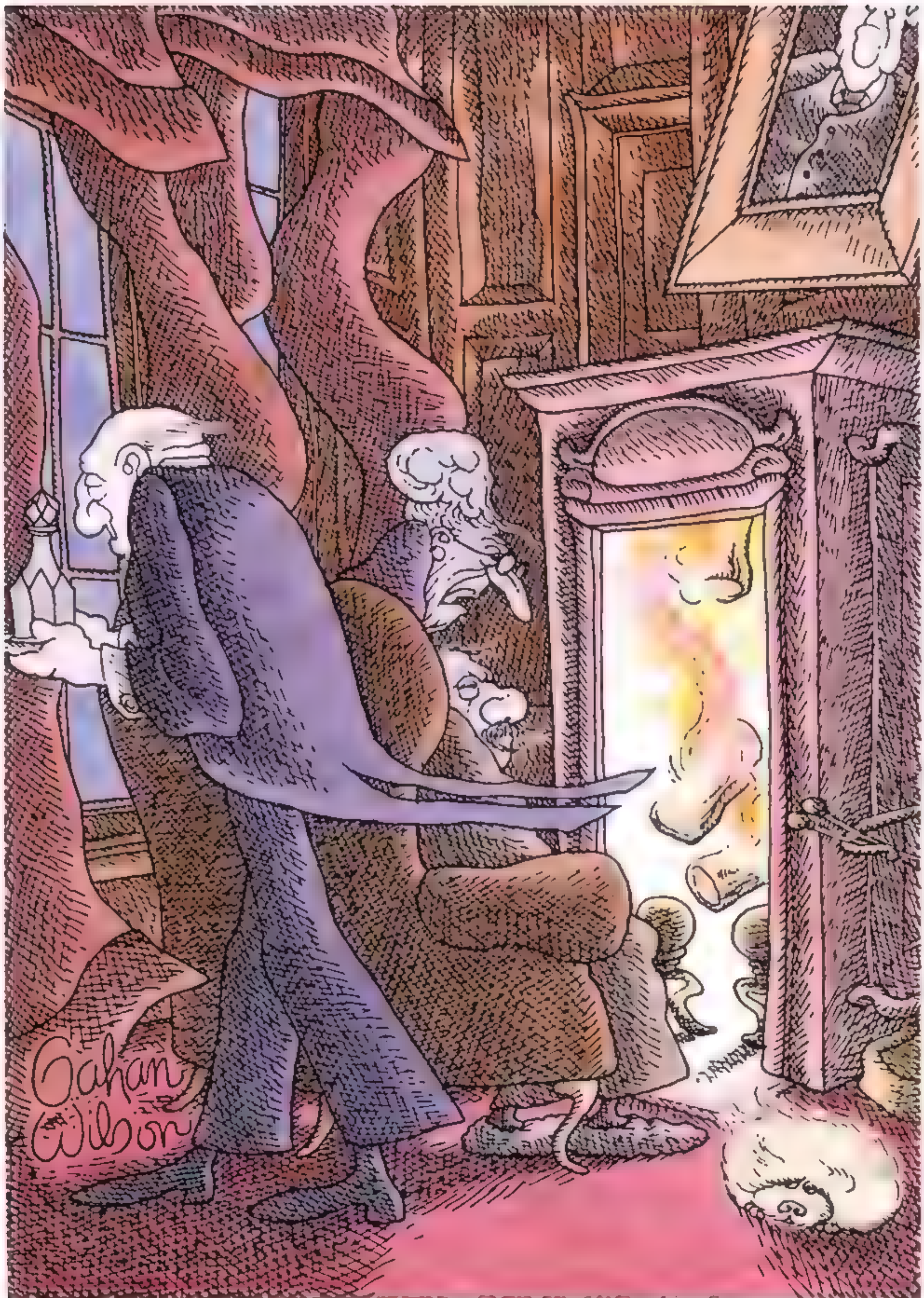
*"It's true, of course, that I'm just a machine,
but I do have a built-in vibrator."*



"God, Renny, it's the ultimate disco effect!"



*"You've been to one of those punk-rock
places again, haven't you?"*



"Well, I think it's drawing far too well."



"Look, Charley—the world changes."



Graham
Wilson

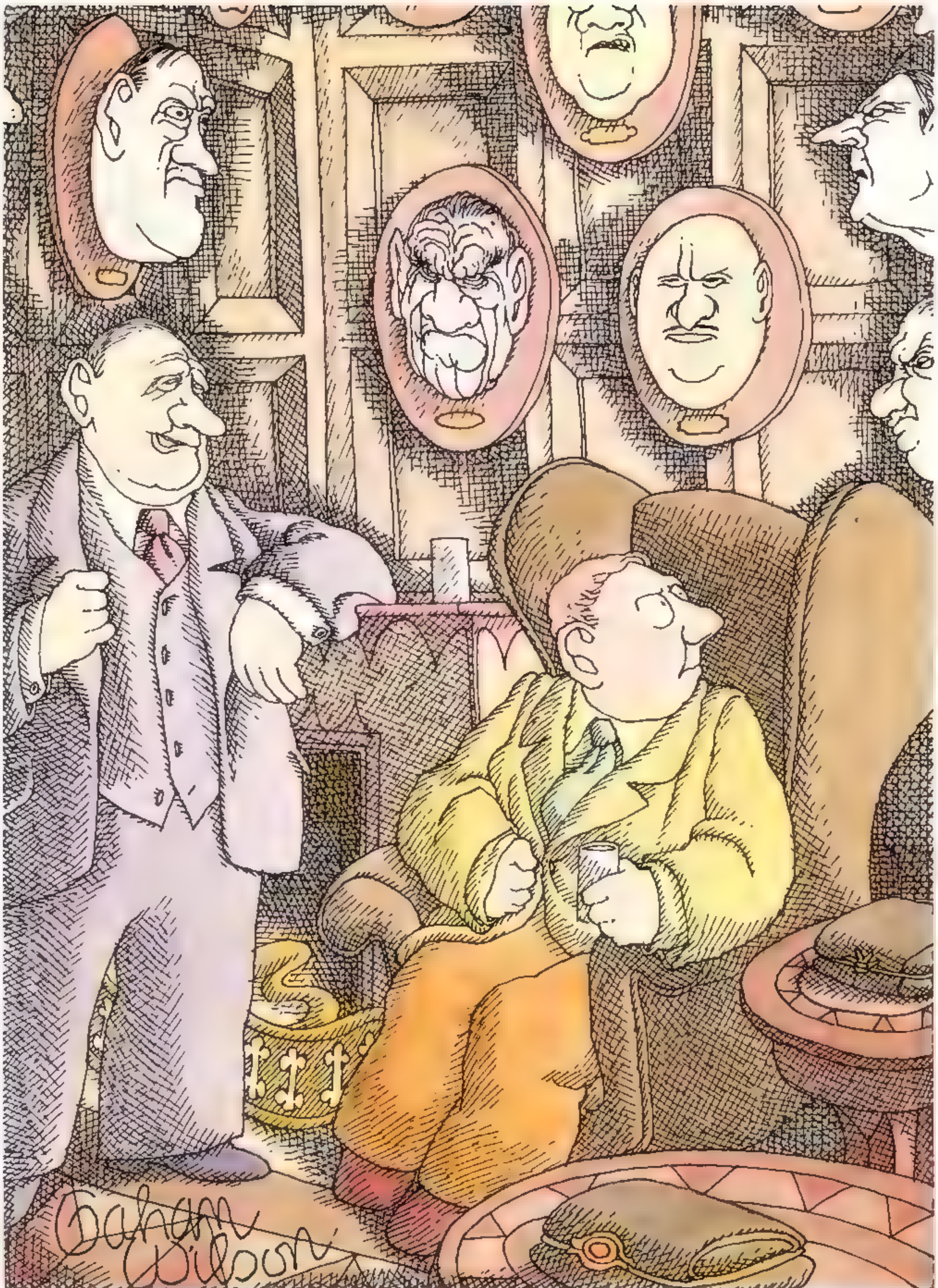
"Oh-oh!"



"I've told you, not when company's here!"



*"Whereas that fellow sitting on your right
 just came in a couple of weeks ago."*



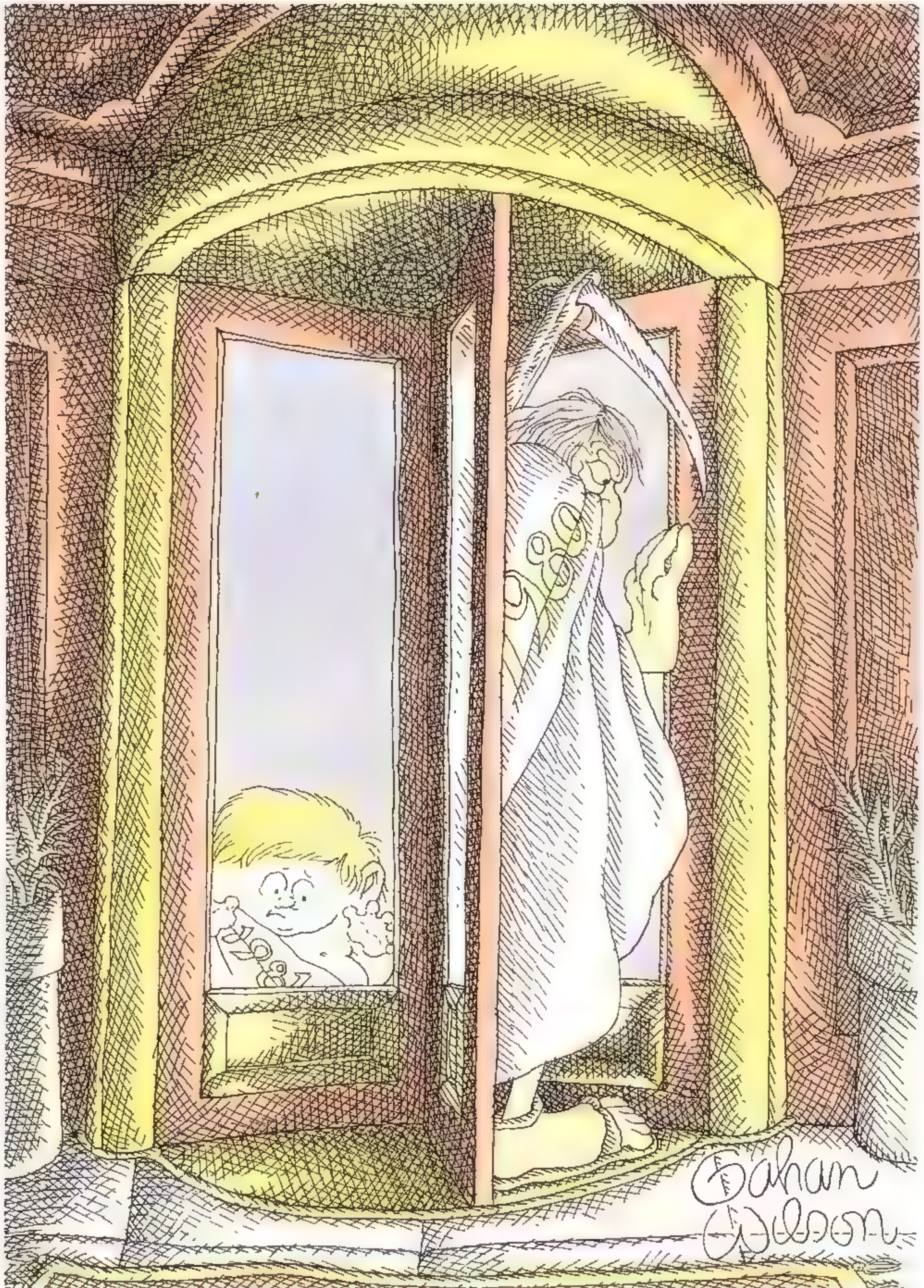
*"It's a little eccentricity of mine—after I've beaten a man
in business, I like to have him stuffed."*

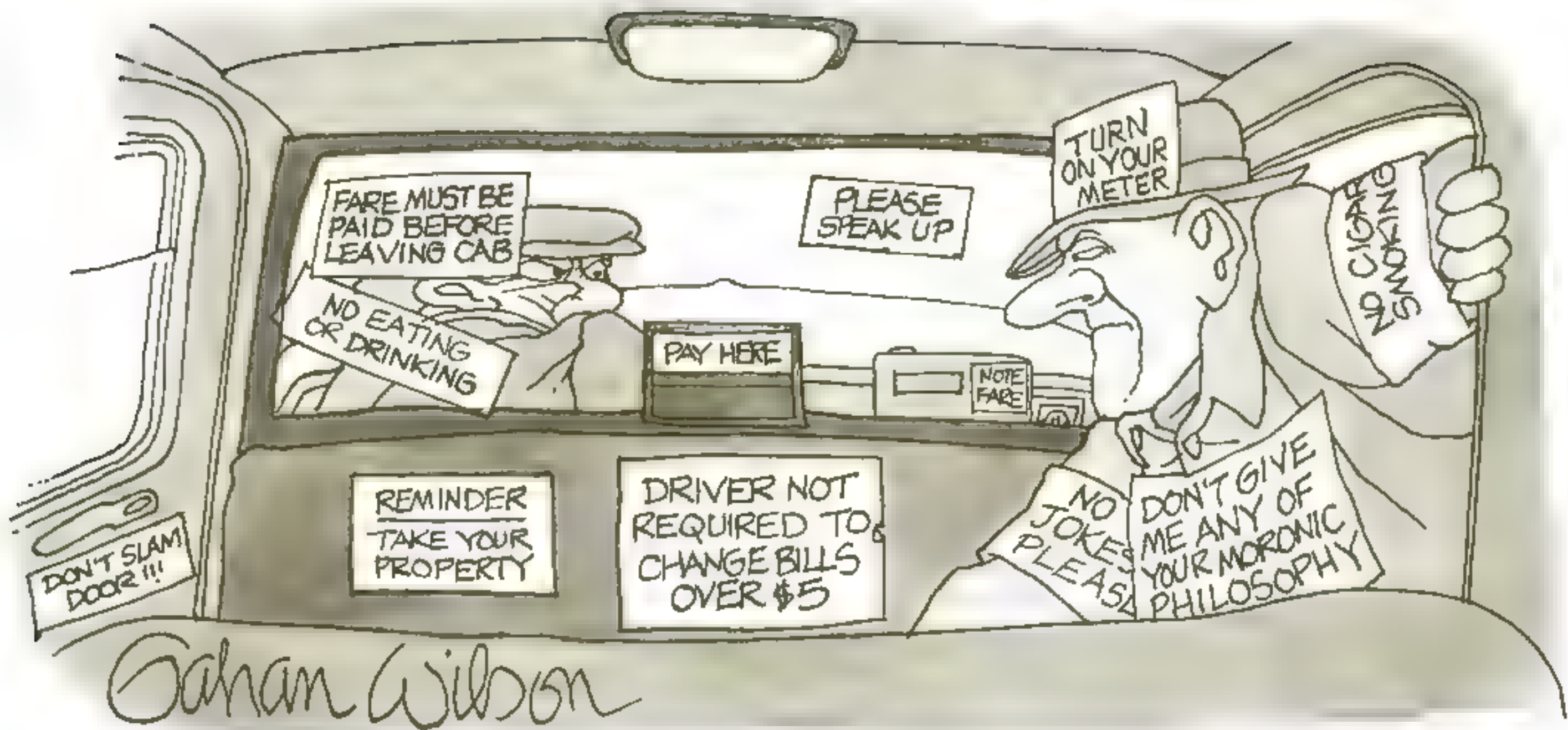


*"To tell the truth, I wish this place hadn't
caught on with the werewolves!"*



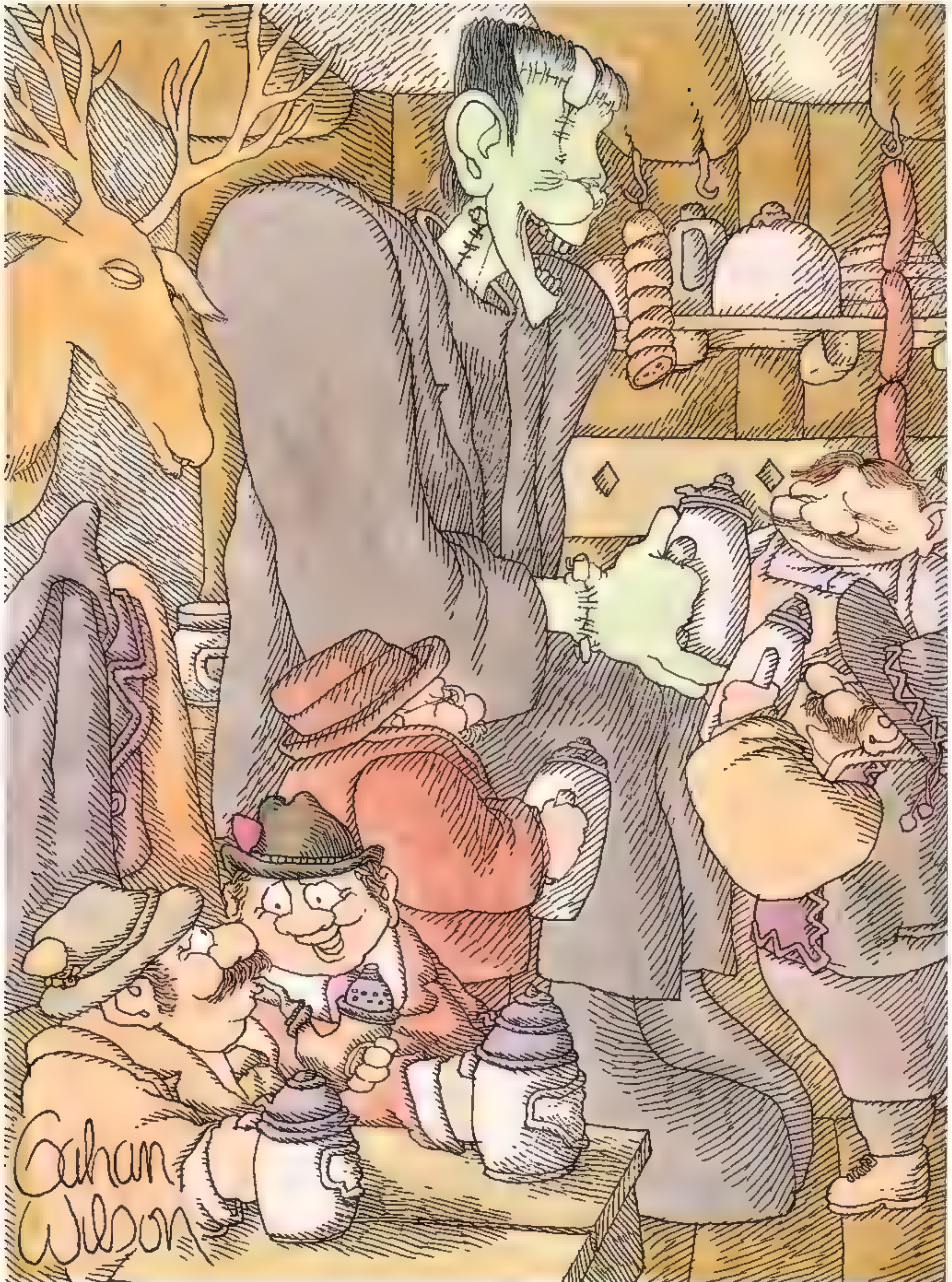
*"Any time Christmas falls on the full moon—
we've got problems!"*







"Look, I appreciate your persistence, doc, but it's settled."



*"You know, he's not really such a bad fellow once
you get a couple of drinks in him!"*



"Yes, I must admit I've done rather well here."



"I'm very touched, fellows."

Gahan
Wilson

"But, seriously folks...."



"Nothing personal, Dad, but if I were you, I wouldn't ask too many questions about my boys' club."

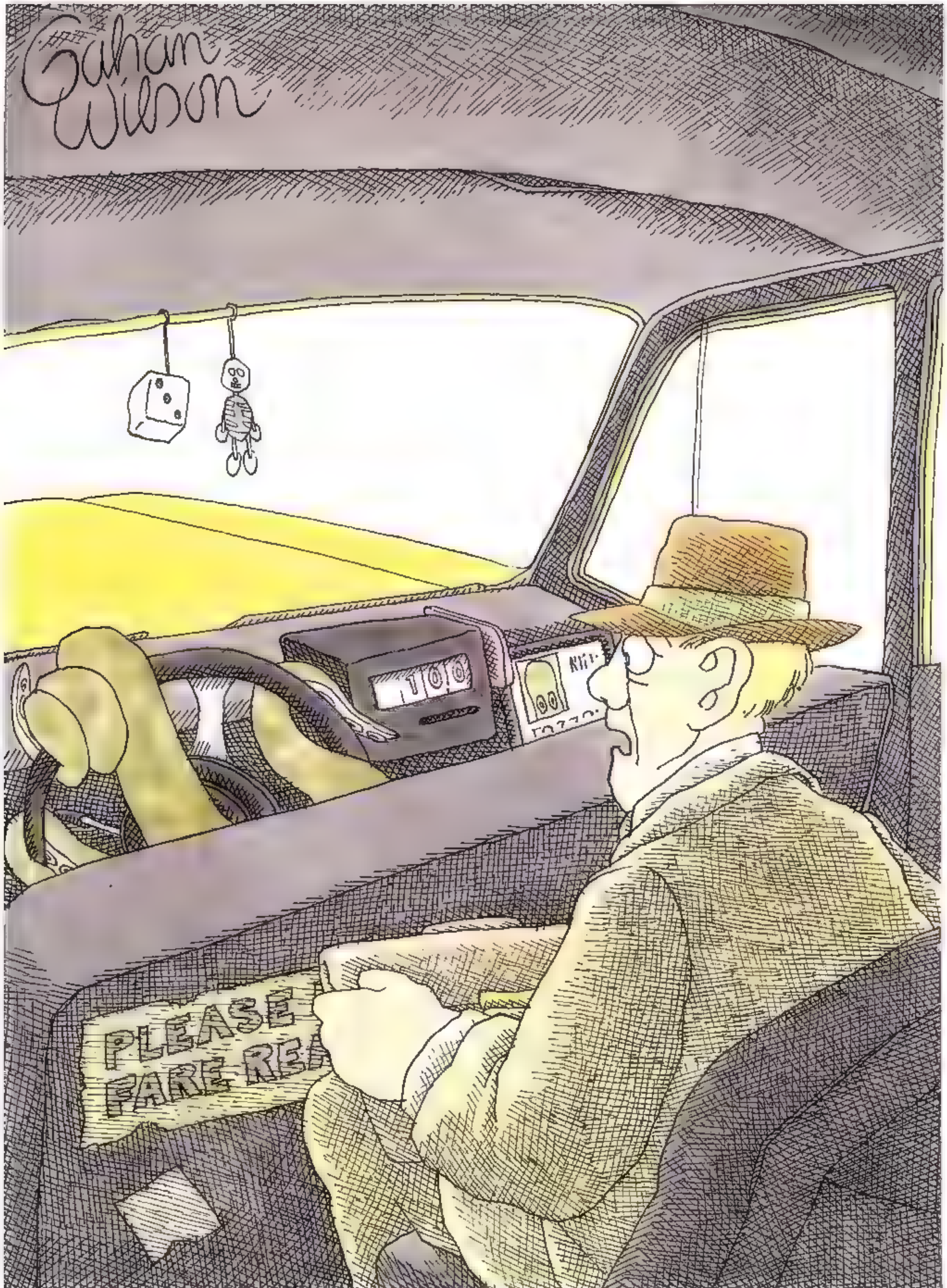


"Oh, believe me, everyone's very pleased you're here, sir!"

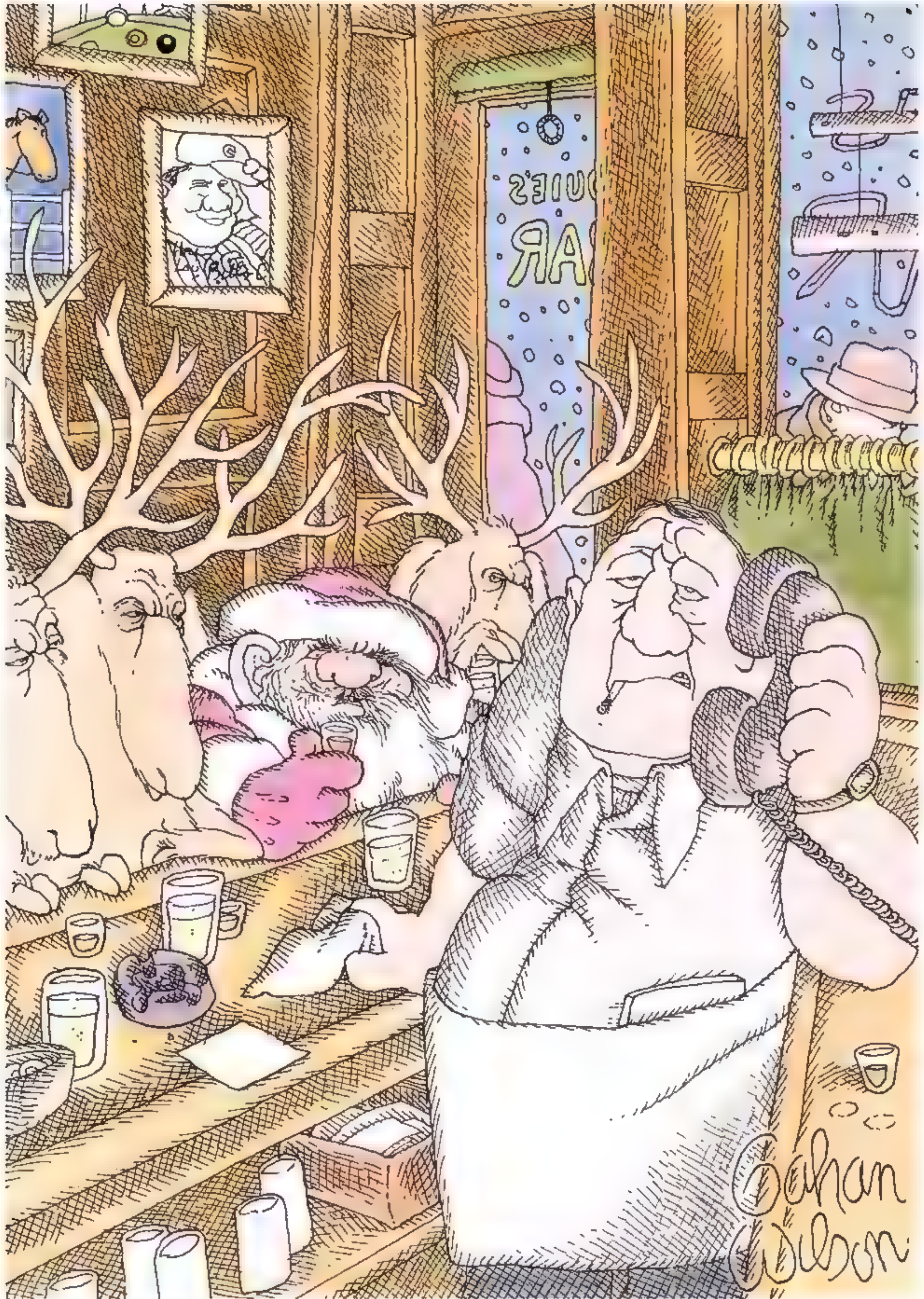


Graham Wilson

"And that would be little Susan."



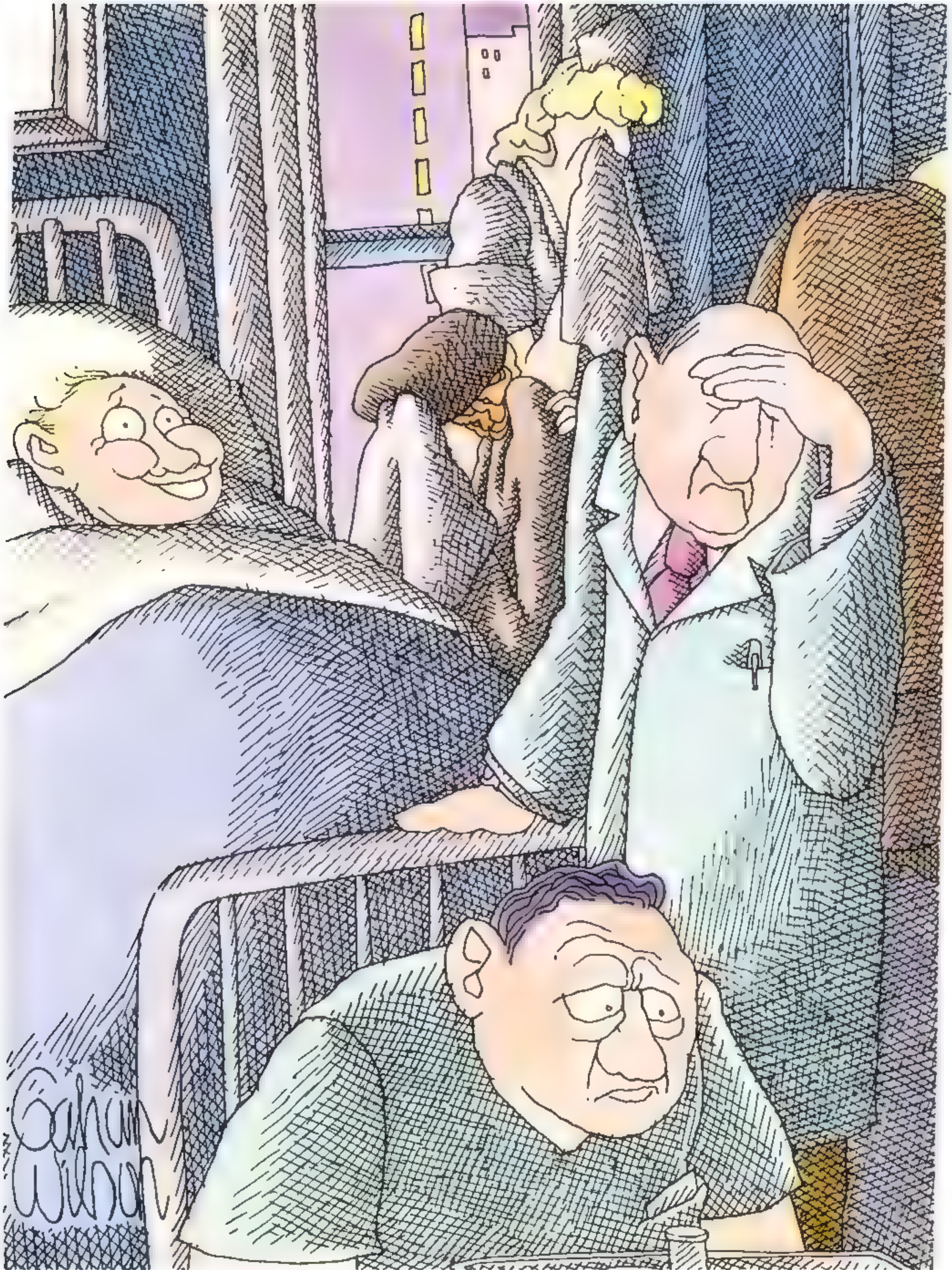
"Er, driver, just let me off right here, please!"



"I'm sorry, Mrs. Claus, but nobody here fits that description...."



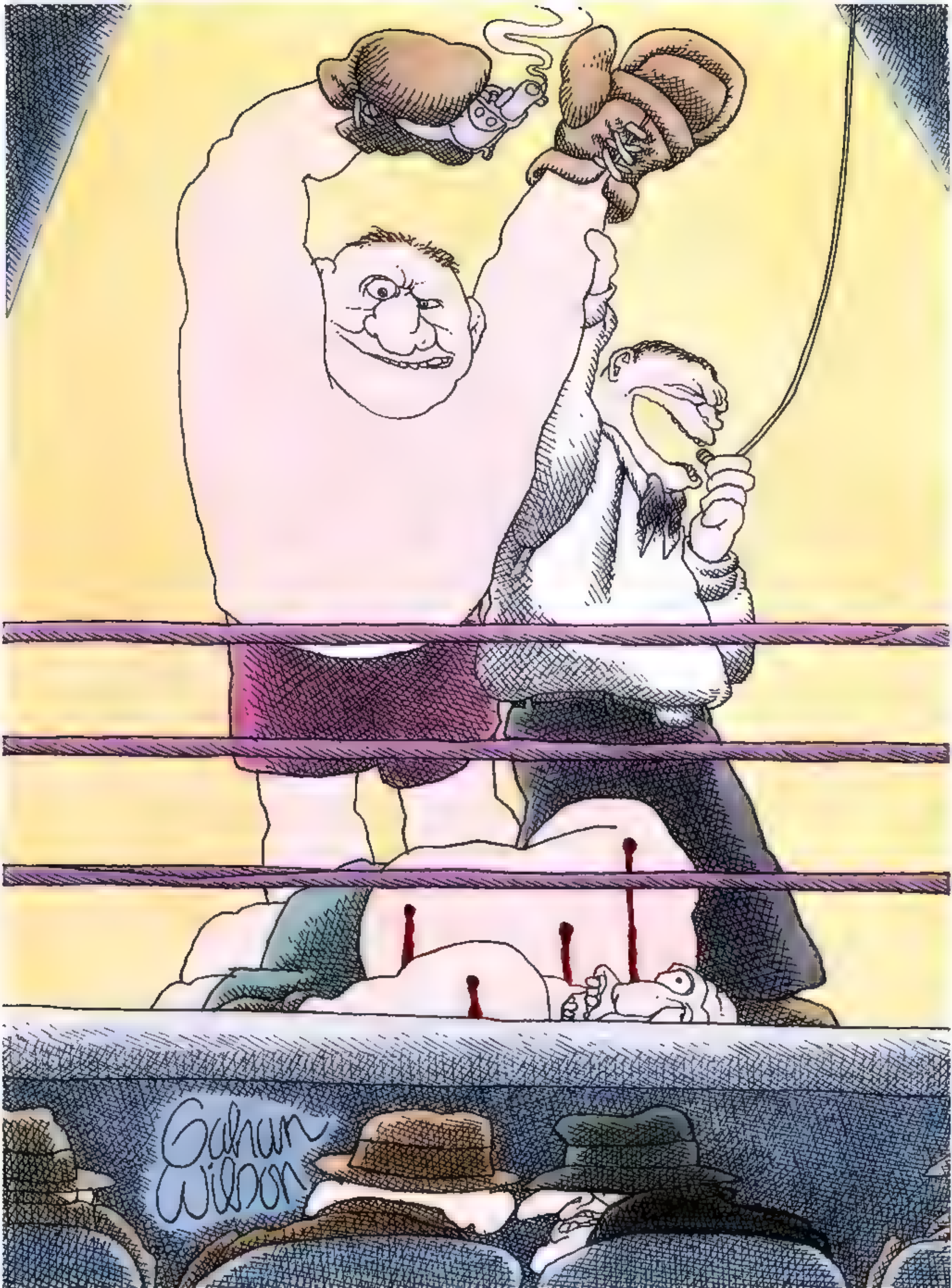
"Sell all my stocks and buy lots of old comic books instead!"



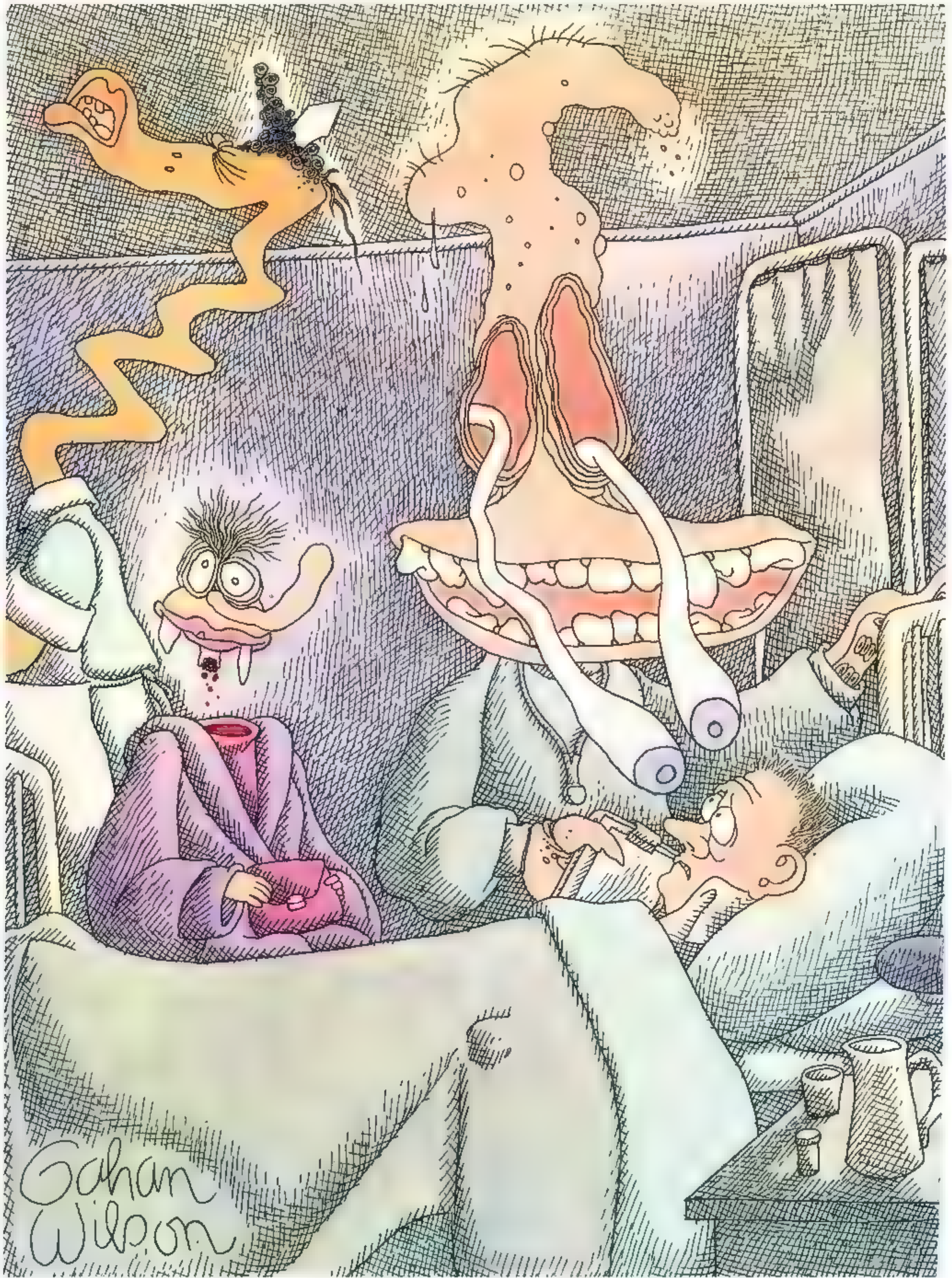
"Well, thank heavens I can still laugh about it!"



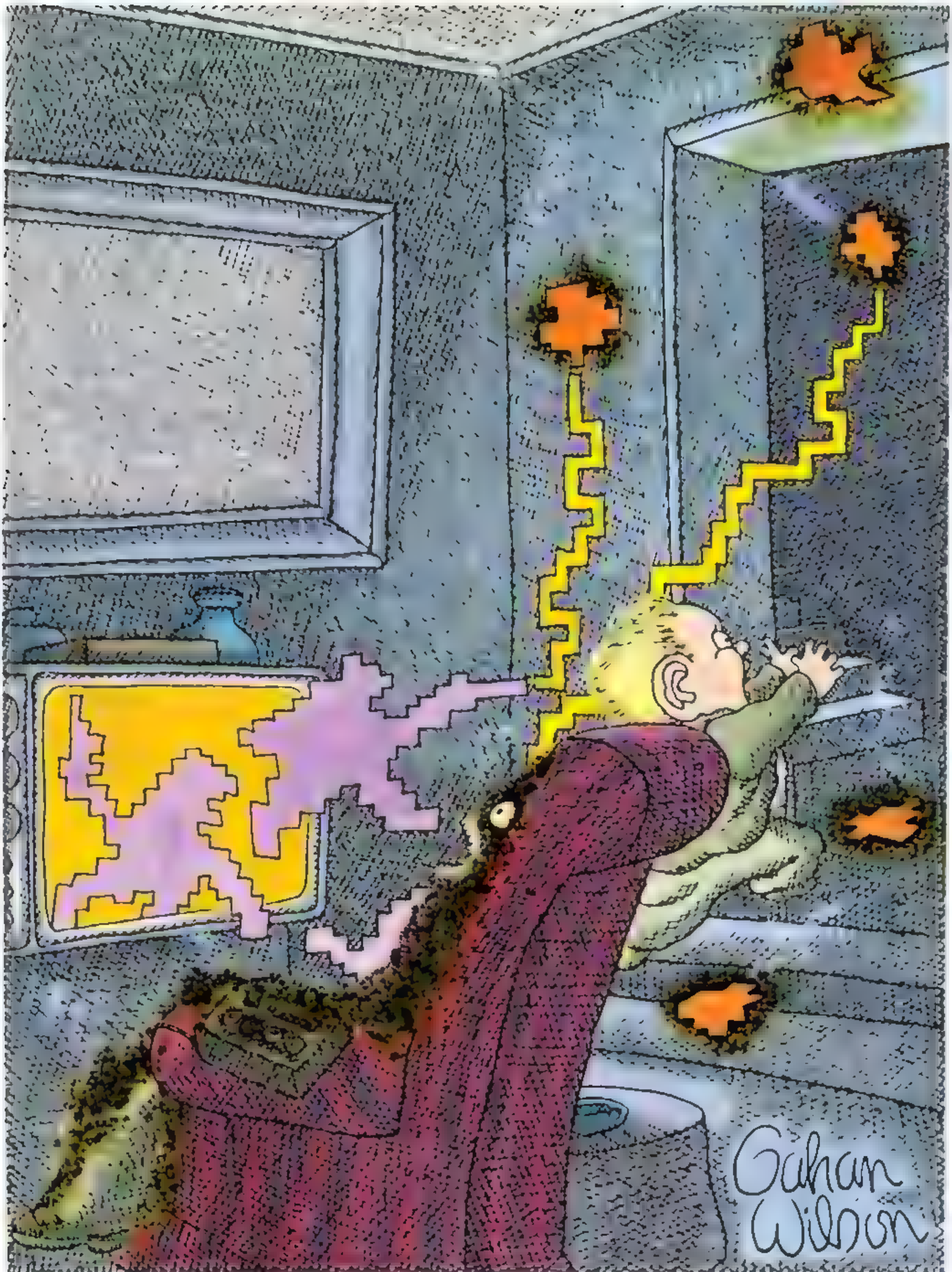
*"First, understand that from up here
you all look like a bunch of ants."*



"Try and tell me that referee wasn't paid off!"



*"Now, those pills you just took may produce
some visual side effects."*



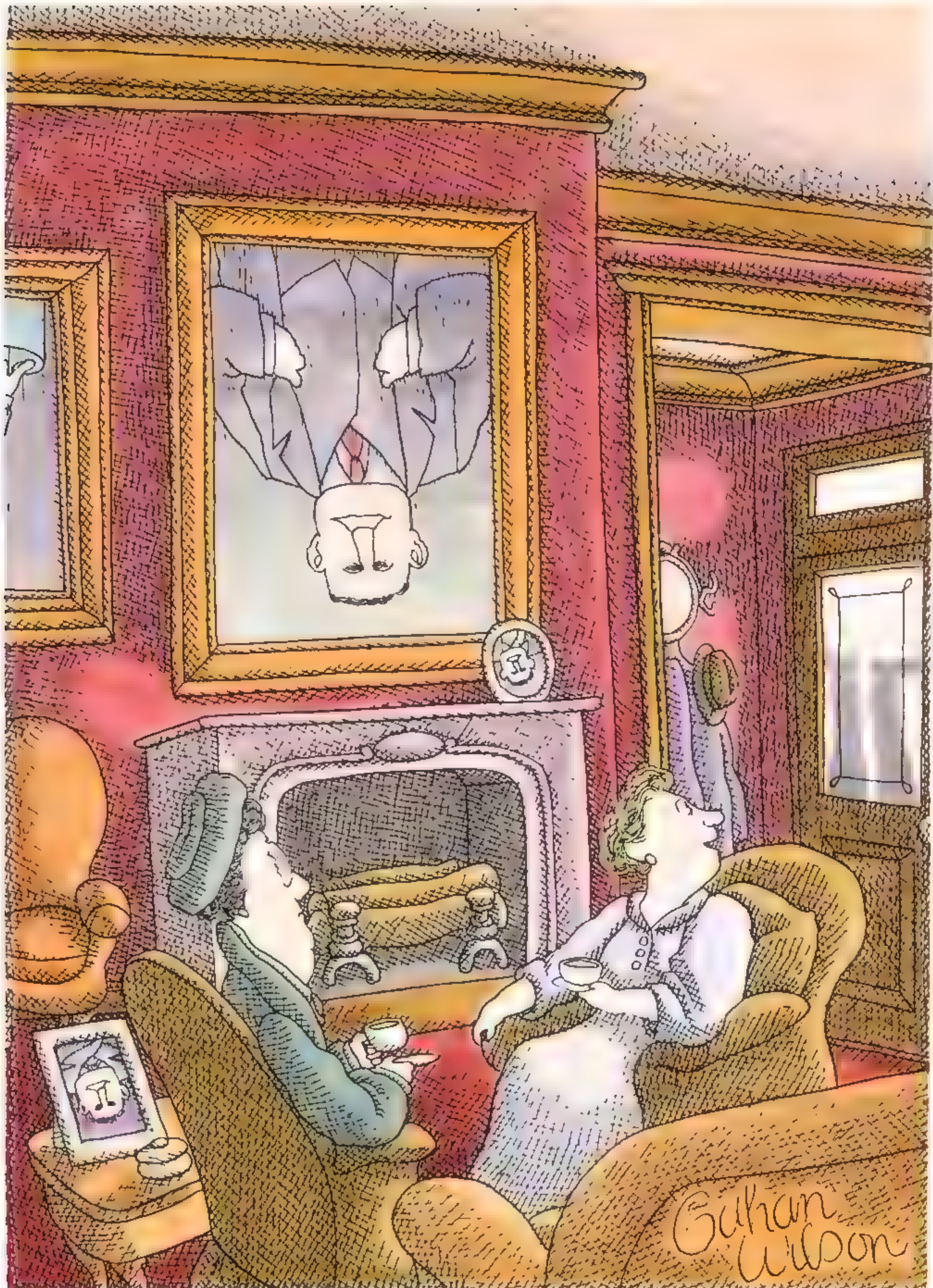
"Mommy! Mommy! Daddy lost!"



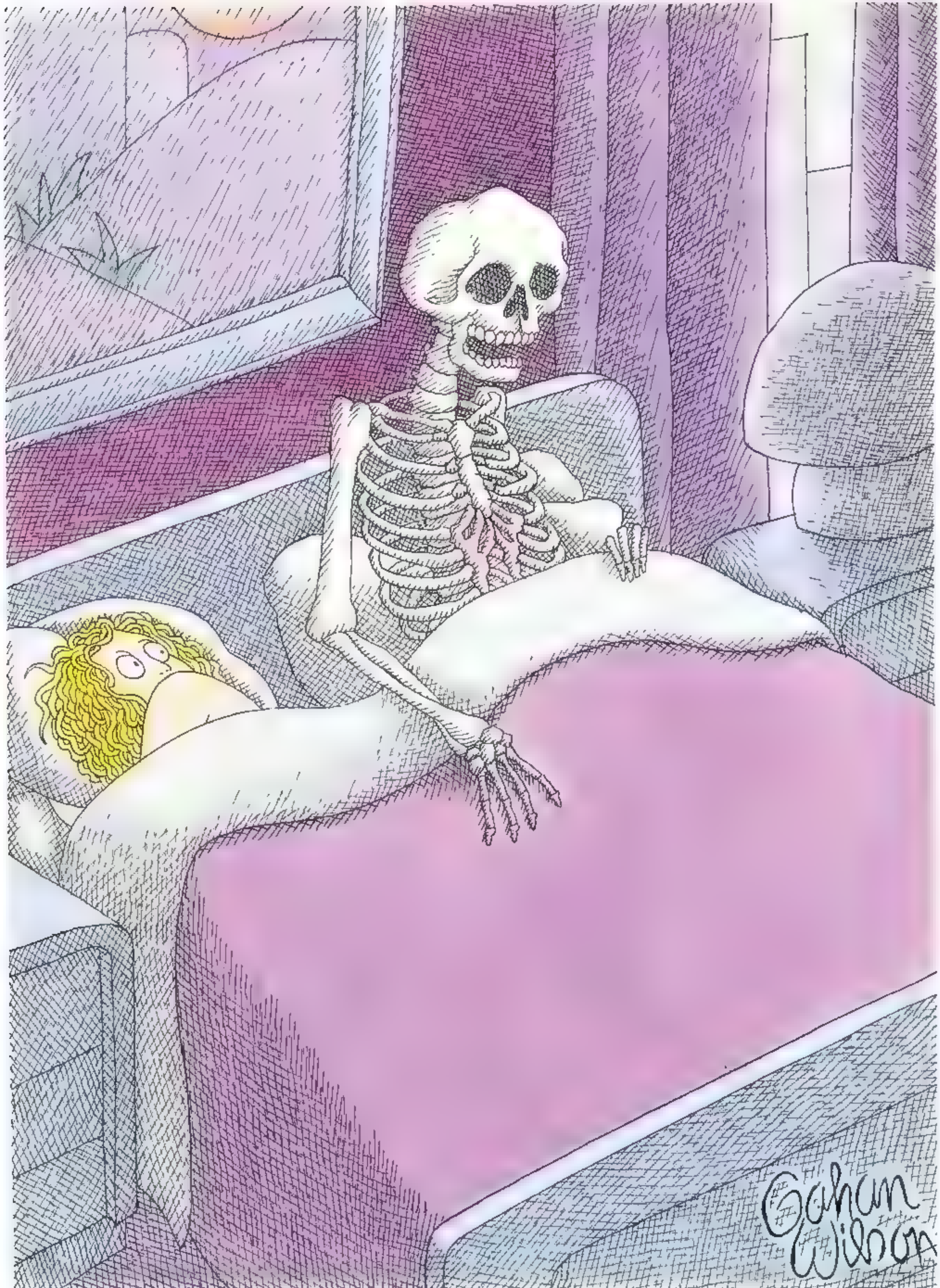


"There! I heard it again!"

"I'VE JUST HAD
THE MOST HORRIBLE
DREAM!"



"Here comes Howard now!"



"I've just had the most horrible dream!"



Spot illustration for article by Danny Goodman titled "Arcade Games Come Home," about in-home versions of Pac-Man, Galaxian and Donkey Kong.



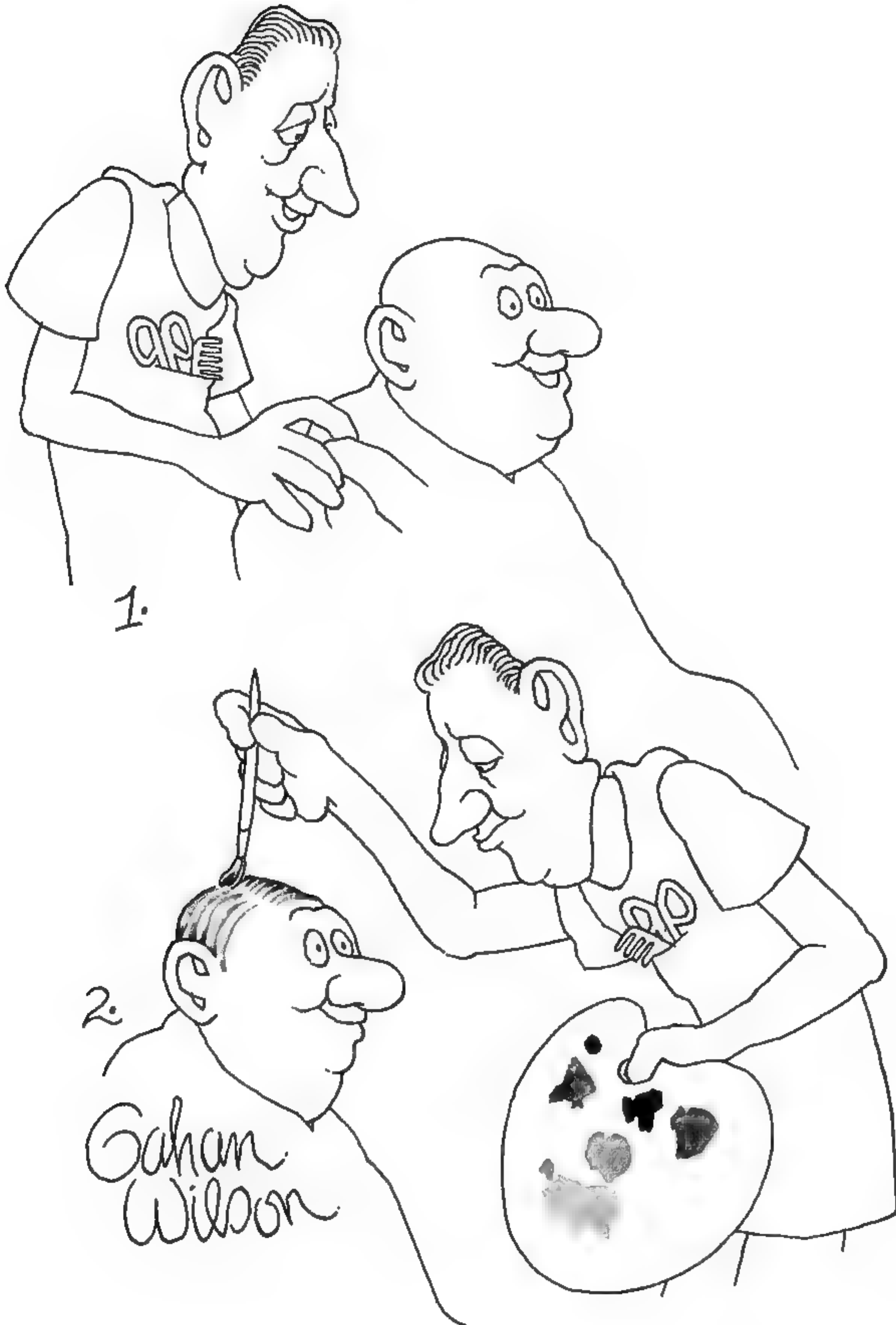
"Look, fella, I'm sorry. What more can I say?"



*"Sometimes it's hard to believe all this
was formed by natural erosion."*



"But I can't arrest him, lady—not on Christmas Eve!"



"The usual, sir?"

"Yes, please."



"Sensors report alien invasion of Sector R-12!"

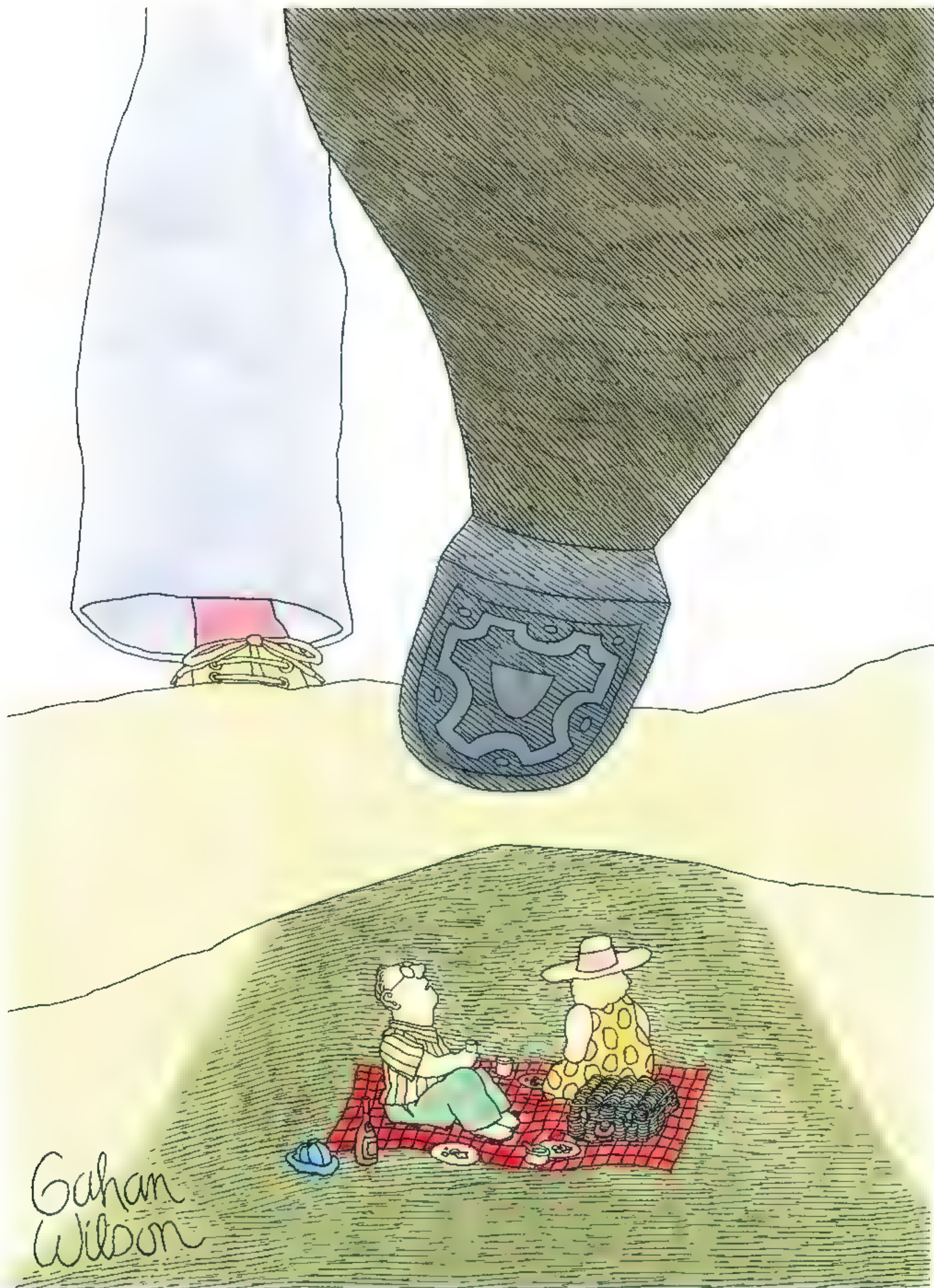


"Well, all right, but hurry, would you? I haven't got much time."

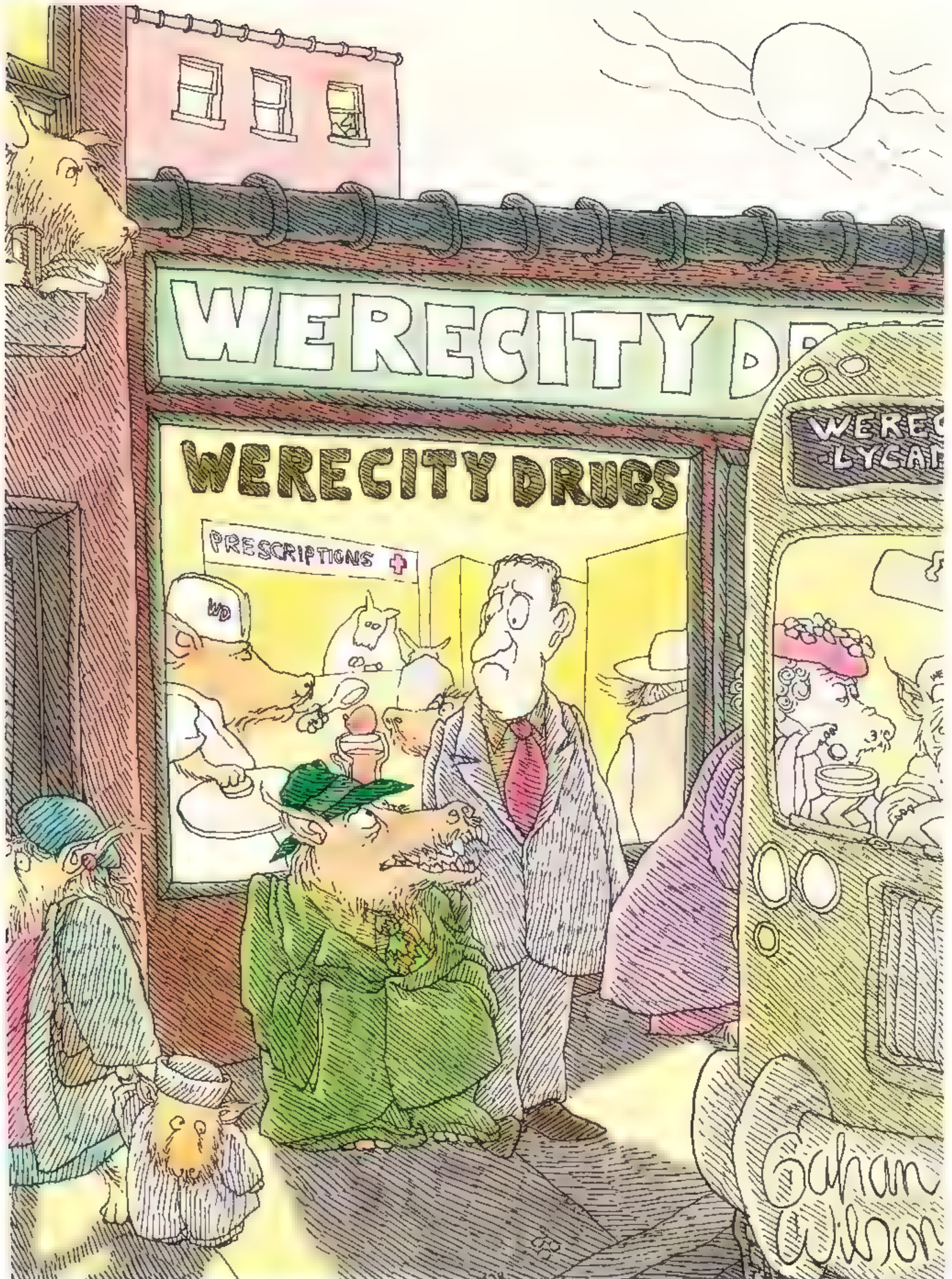


Gahan
Wilson

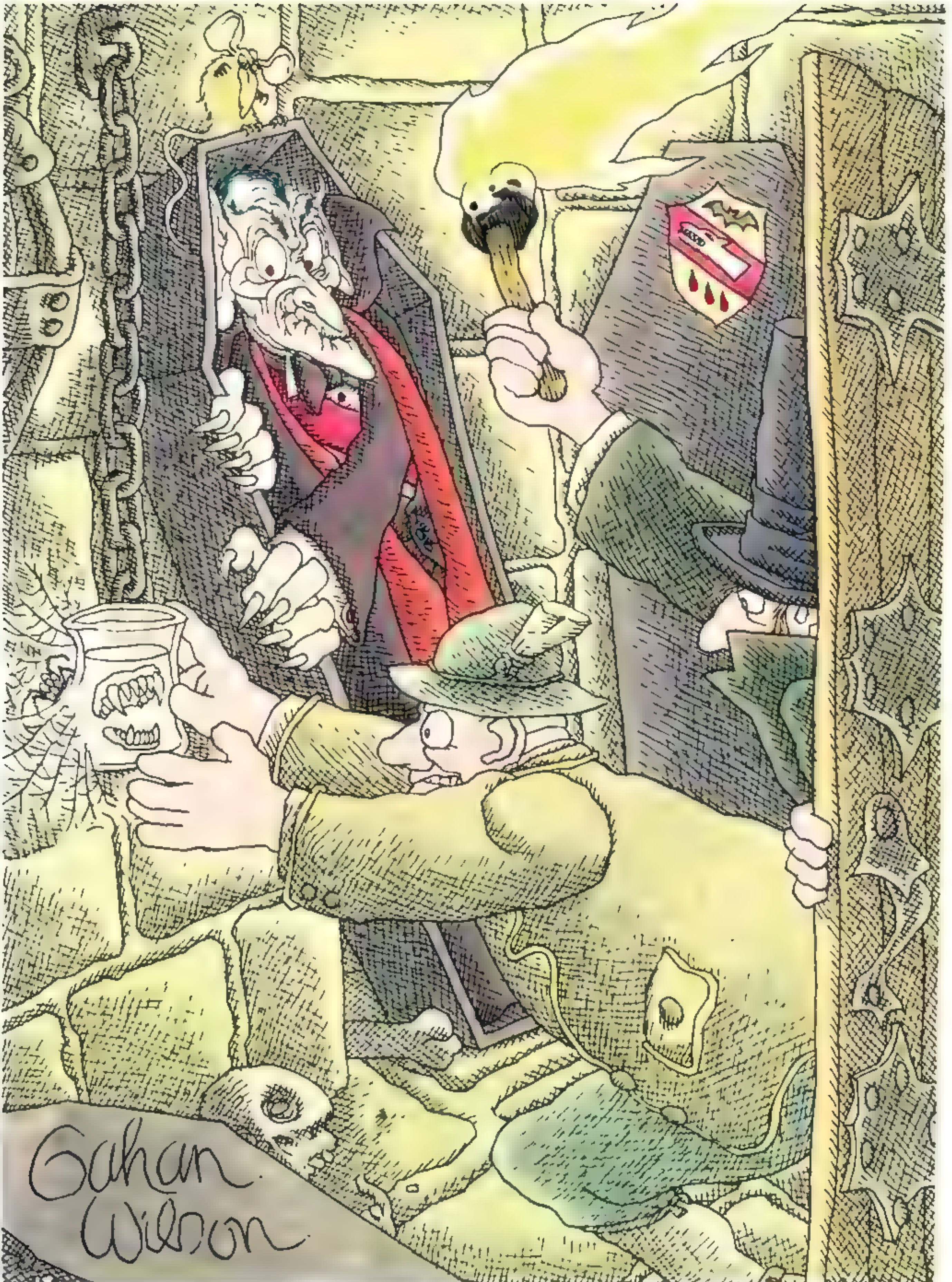
"Now, remember, dear, my folks are a little difficult!"

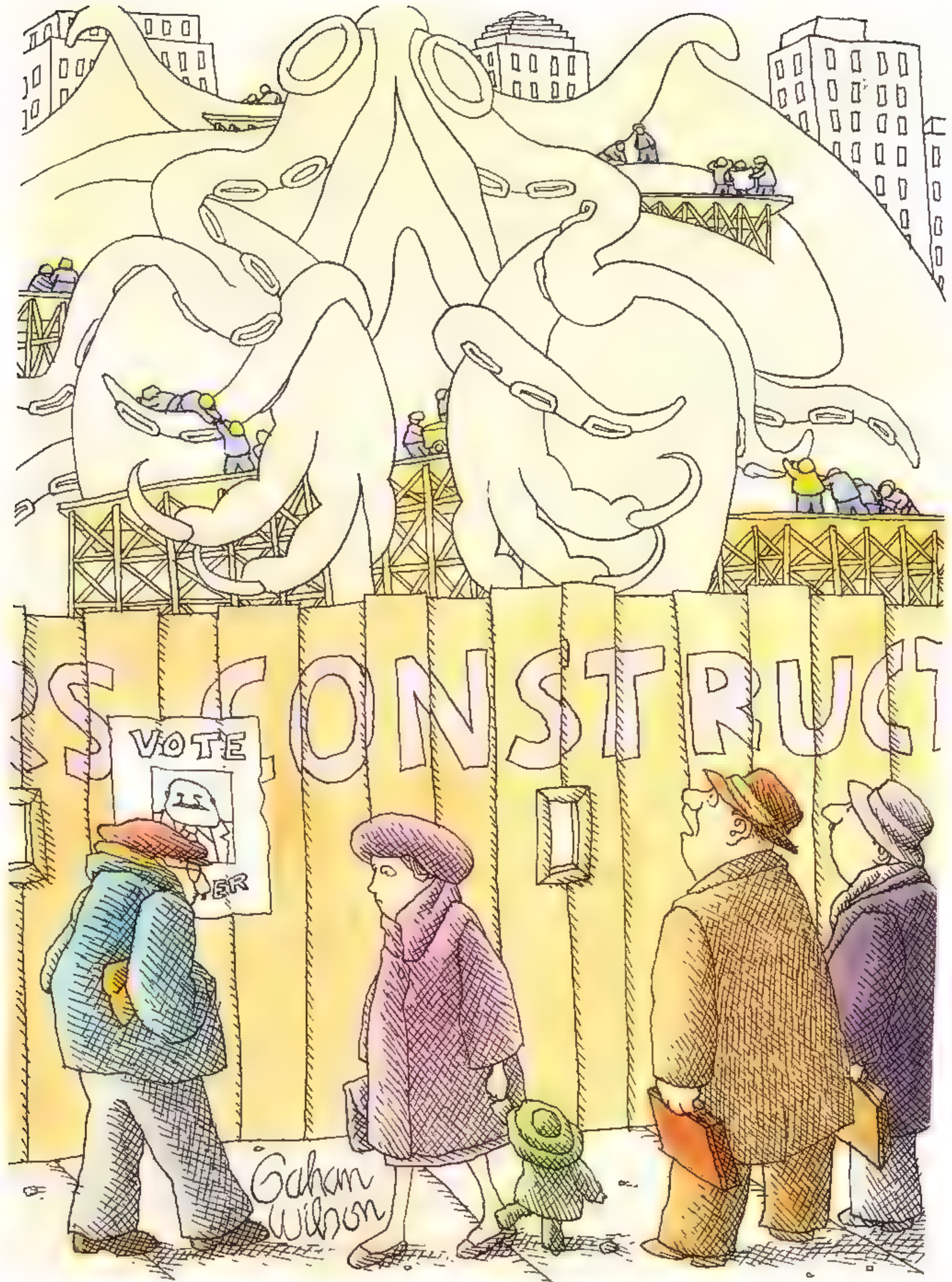


"Well, Millie, I guess this is it for us!"



"Yep, I guess the full moon takes some gettin' used to if you weren't brought up hereabouts."

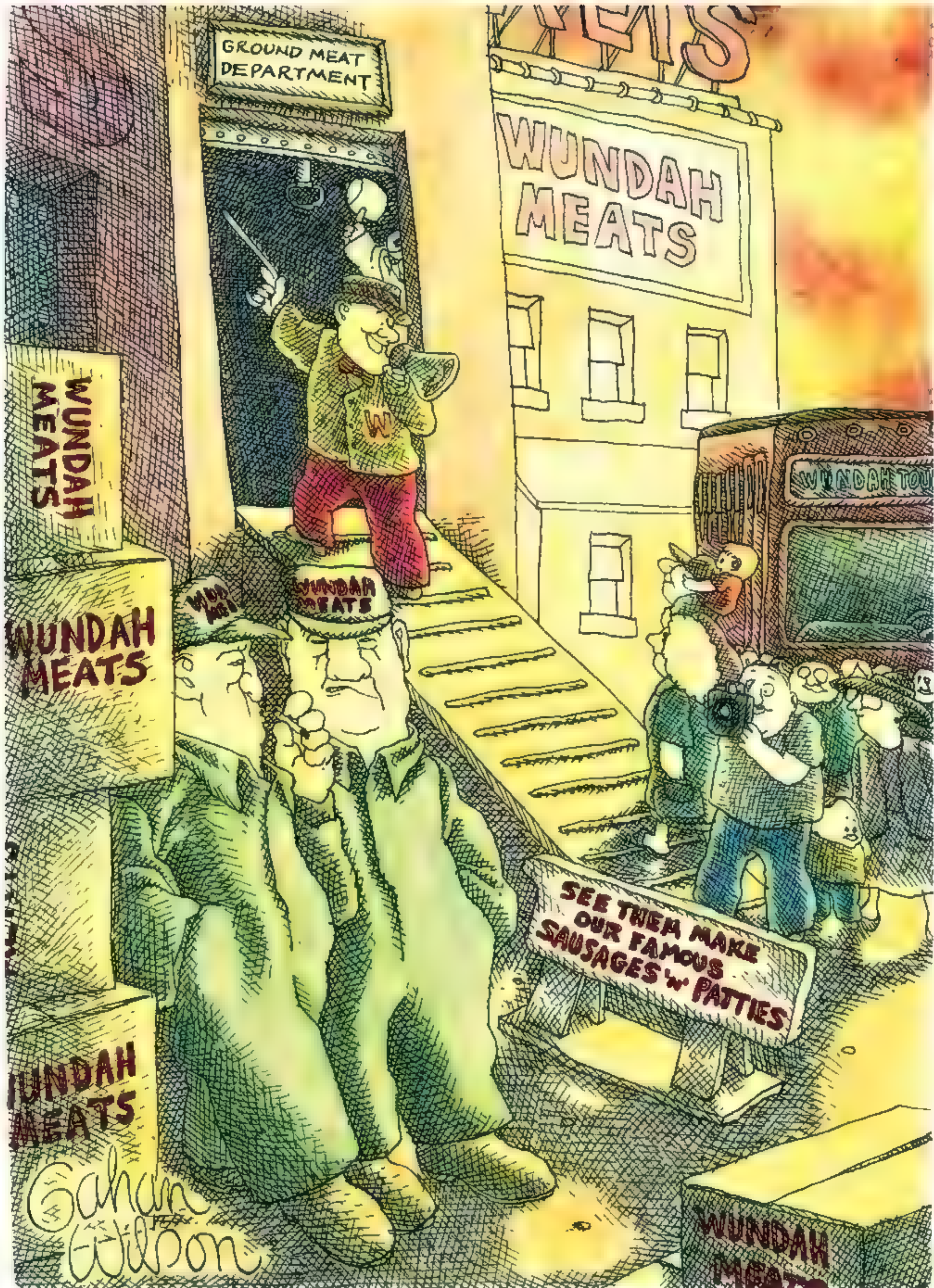




"Gee, I don't know...it was supposed to be a condominium!"







*"You'd think over the years one or two
of them would catch on."*



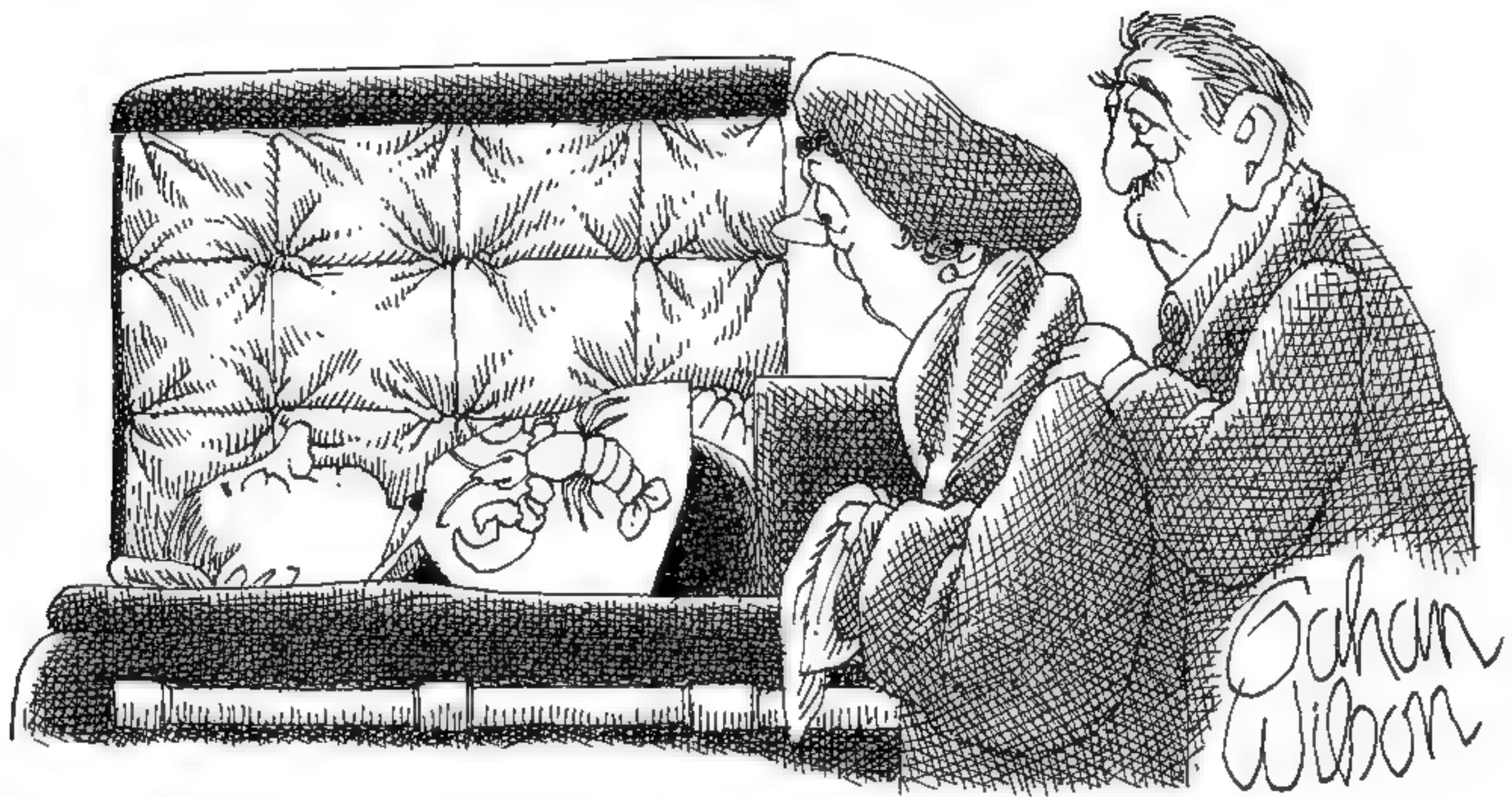
"OK, now—this time for real!"



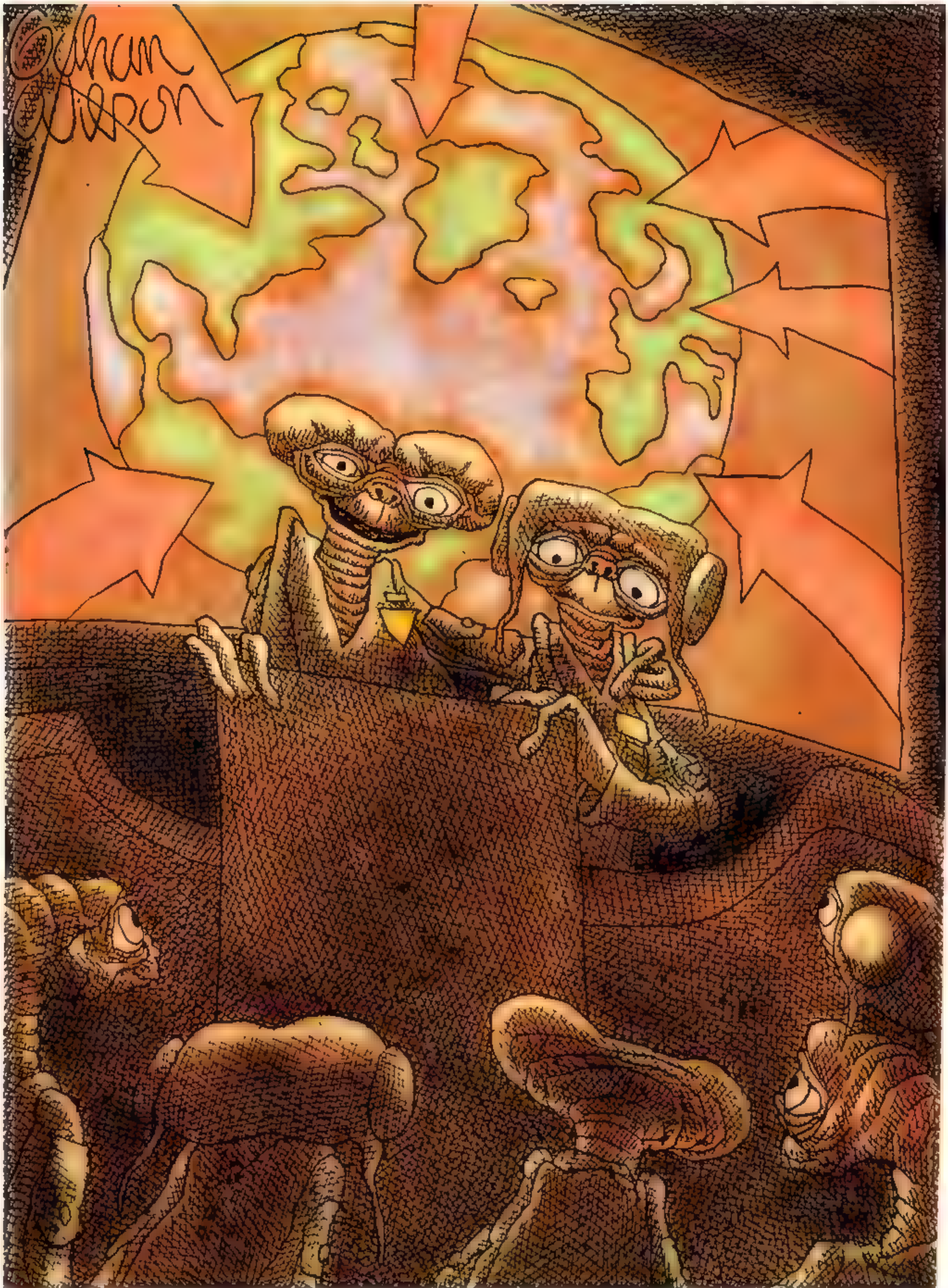
"Face it, Edwin—it isn't that we've all turned into teddy bears, it's that you're going crazy!"



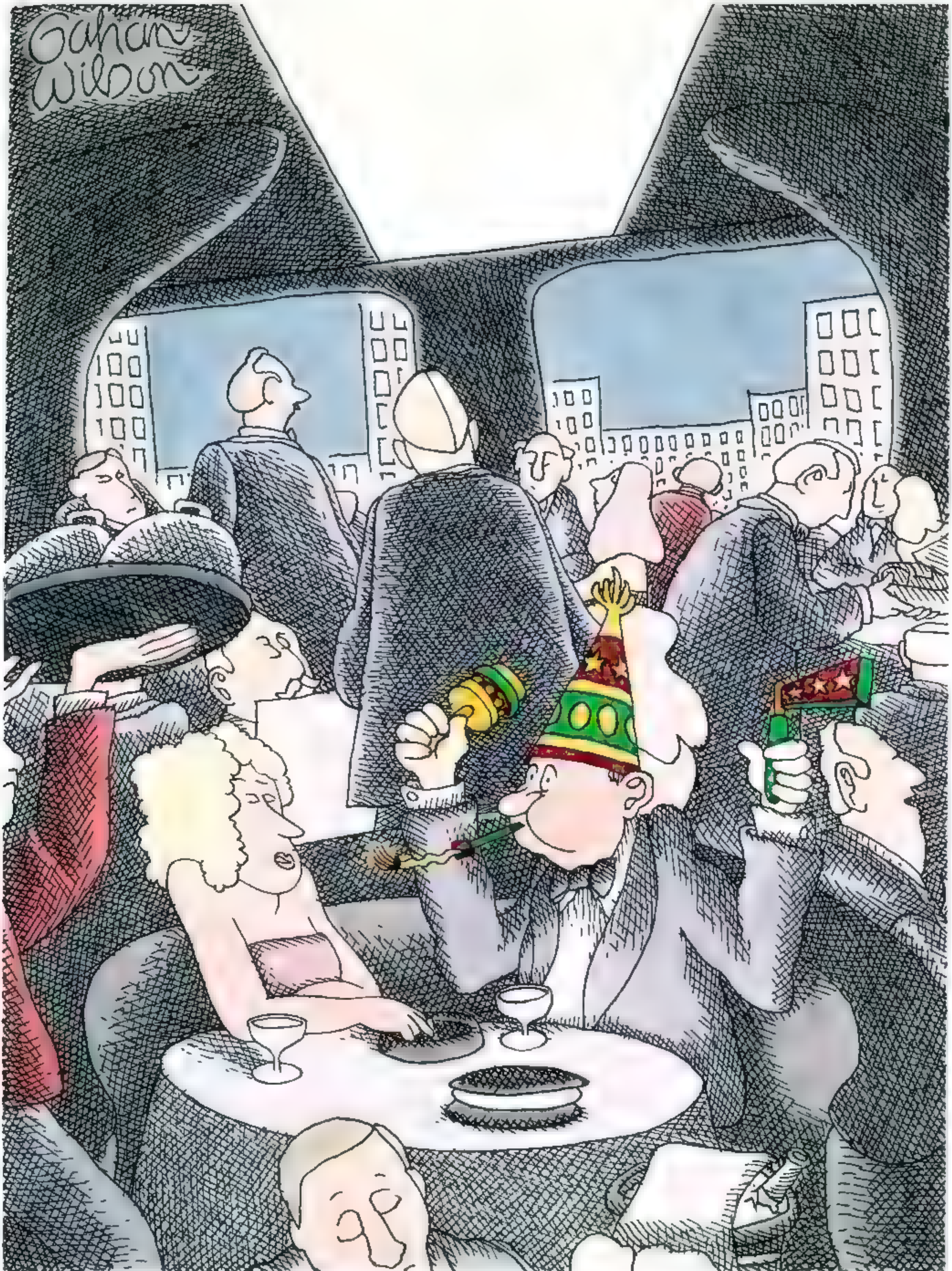
"Offhand, I'd say its diet goes a long way toward explaining the lack of reported sightings."



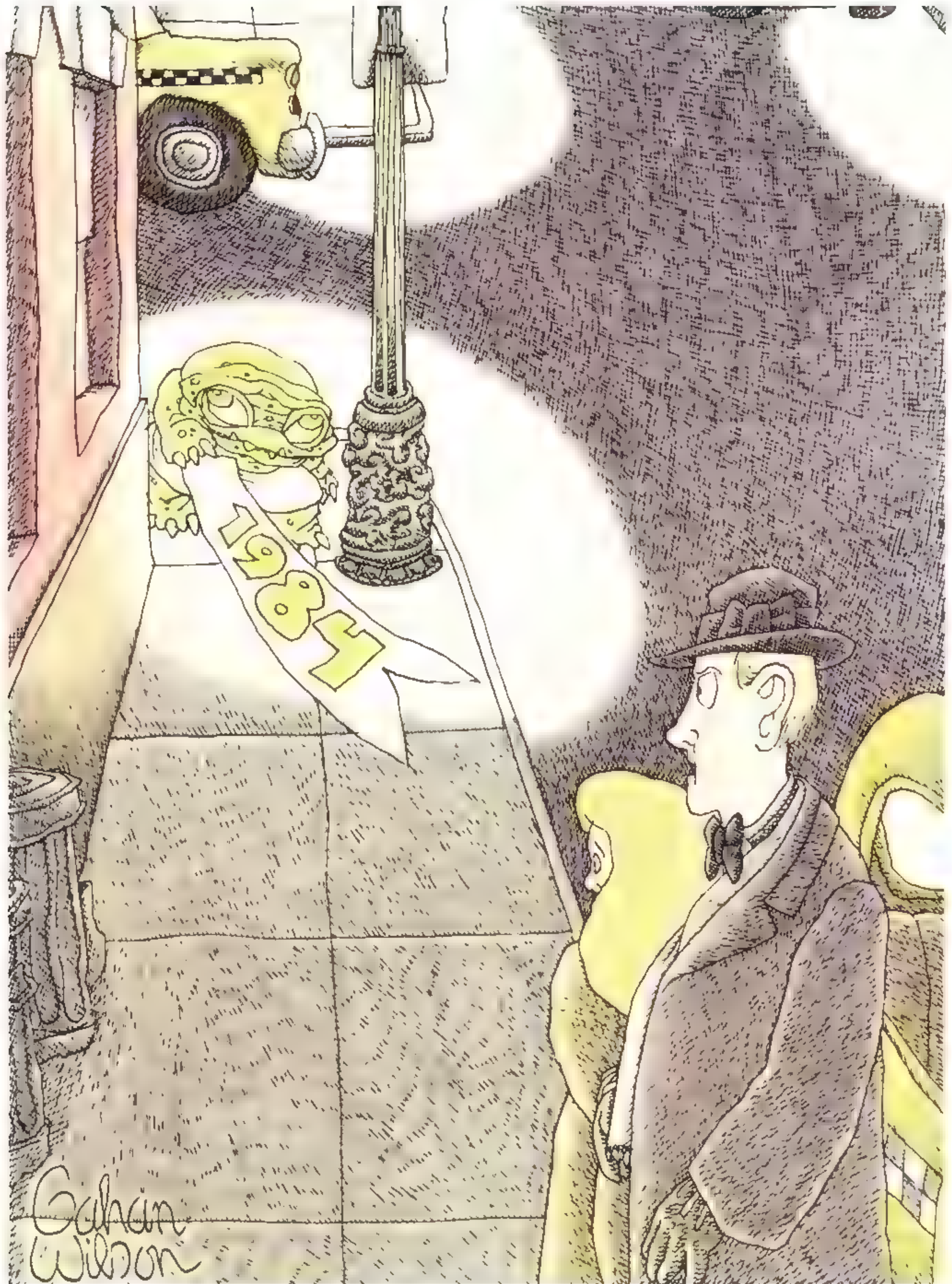
"Poor Harold always did have trouble with seafood."



*"Before we begin the invasion, let us congratulate General Nchh
on a brilliant propaganda coup!"*



"You're always trying too hard, Eddie!"



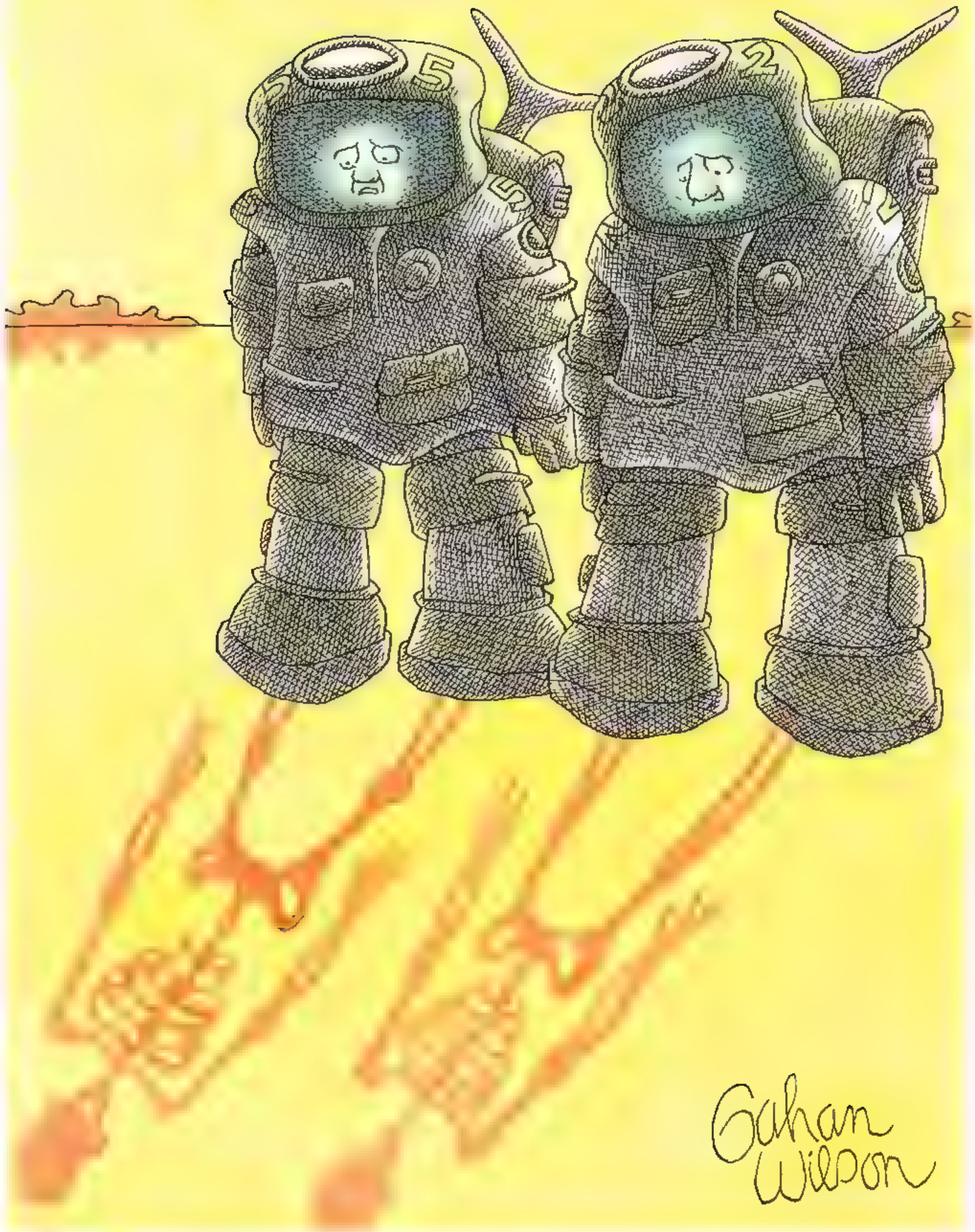
"I don't like the looks of that!"



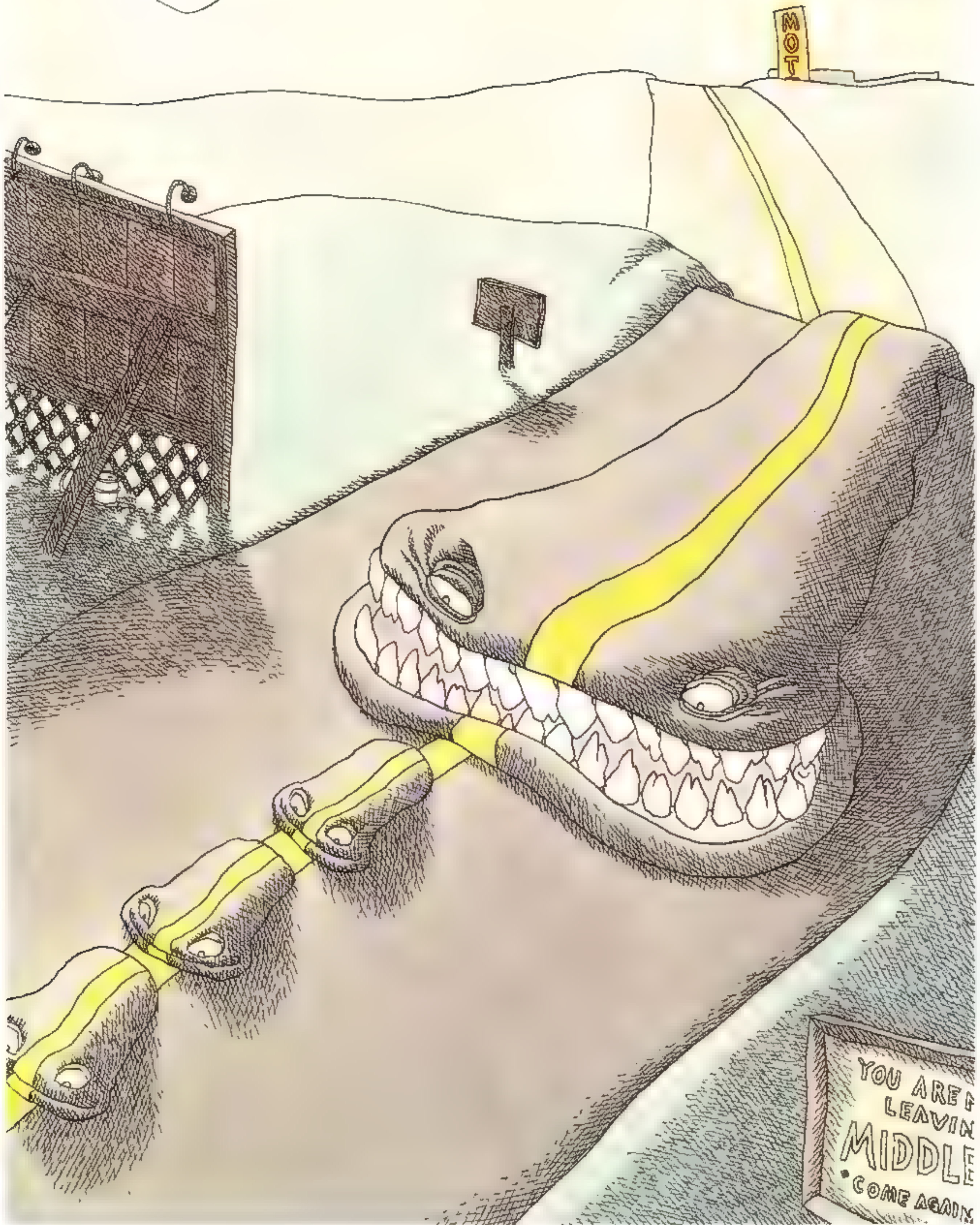
"I'm sorry, sir, but this survey does not allow for that opinion."



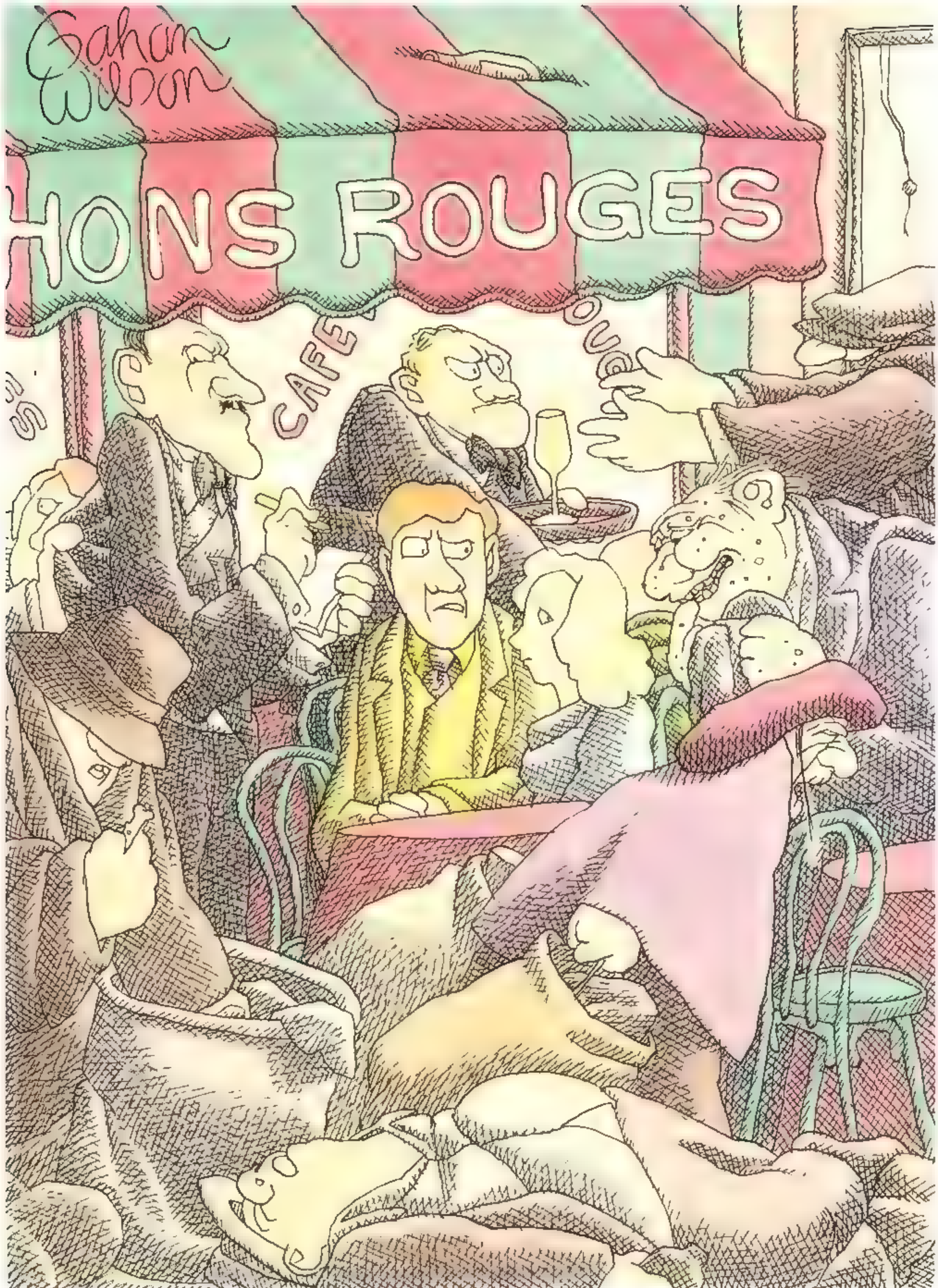
*"It's not for us to question why, on certain mornings,
the master is silent."*



"I think it means we'd better find some shade!"

Gahan
Wilson

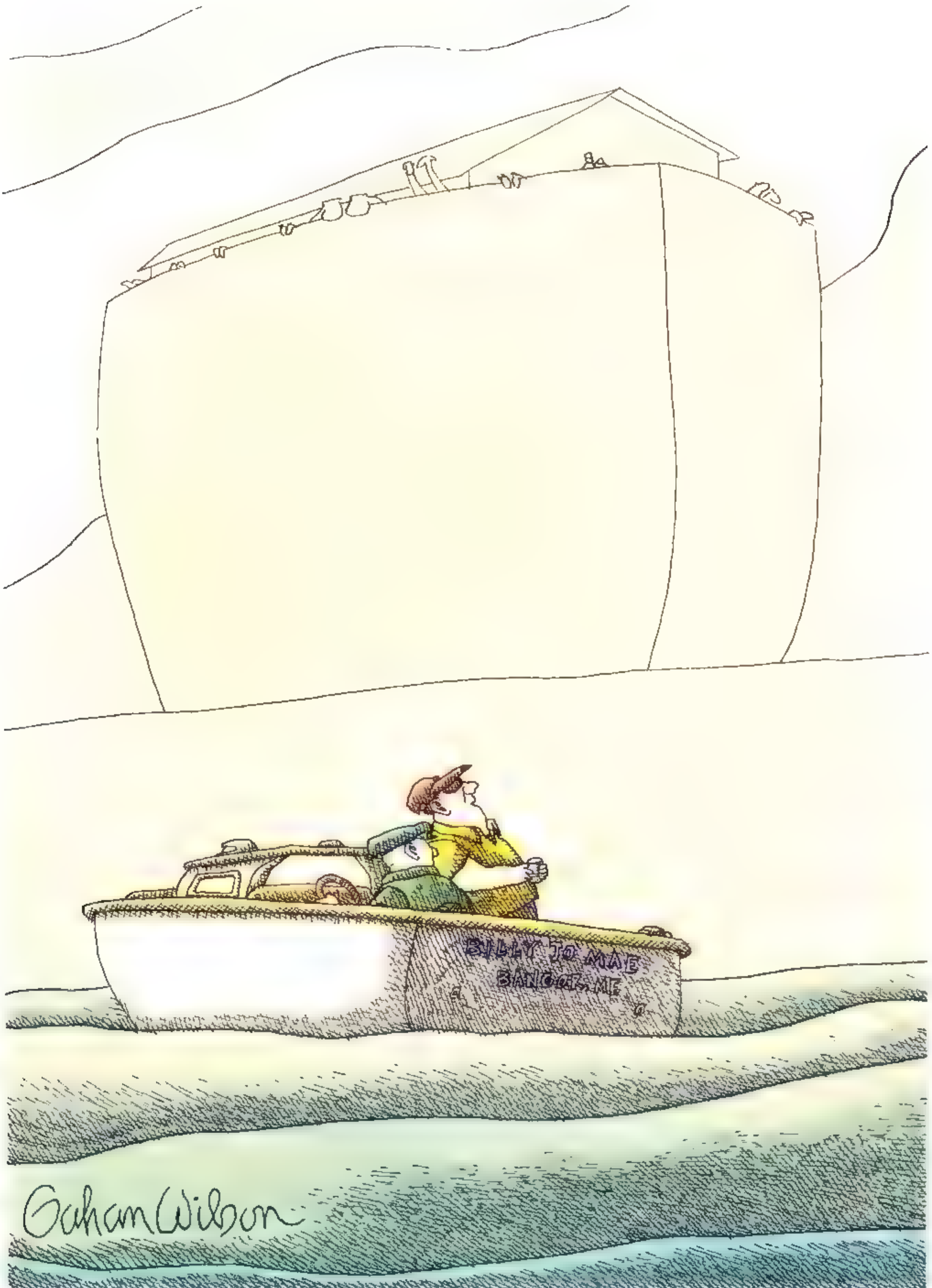
"Remember, children—always crawl along the stripe!"



*"I guess it's really not the right neighborhood
for a sidewalk café."*



"I think it's his beeper."



"I think I've figured out why we can't find the marina."



"Are you really, really sorry?"



*"Some people collect miniatures, but we feel we
have too much money for that."*





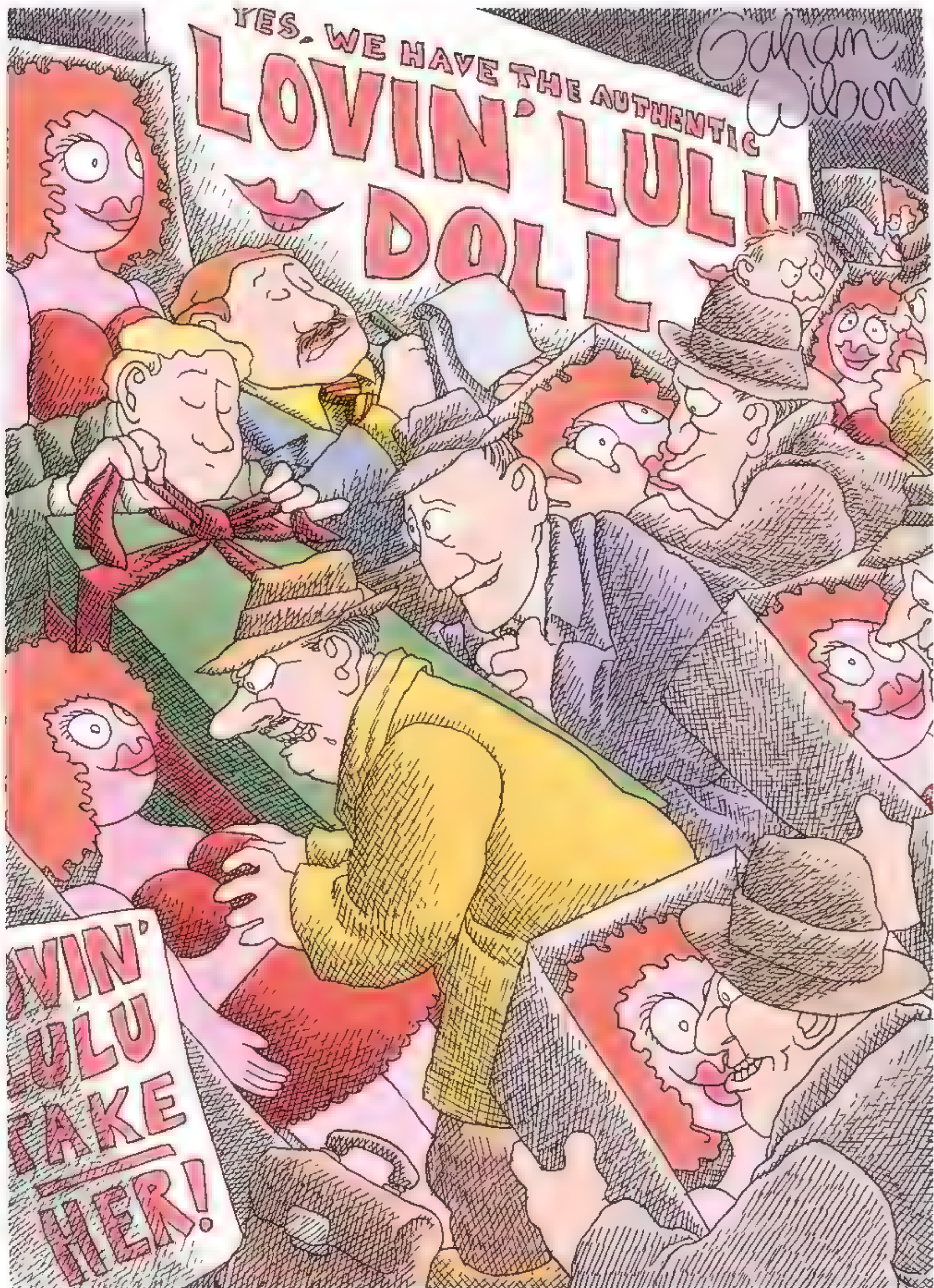
"I'm so glad you could meet my folks!"



"Look—I said I was sorry!"



"There certainly are a lot of little people, aren't there?"



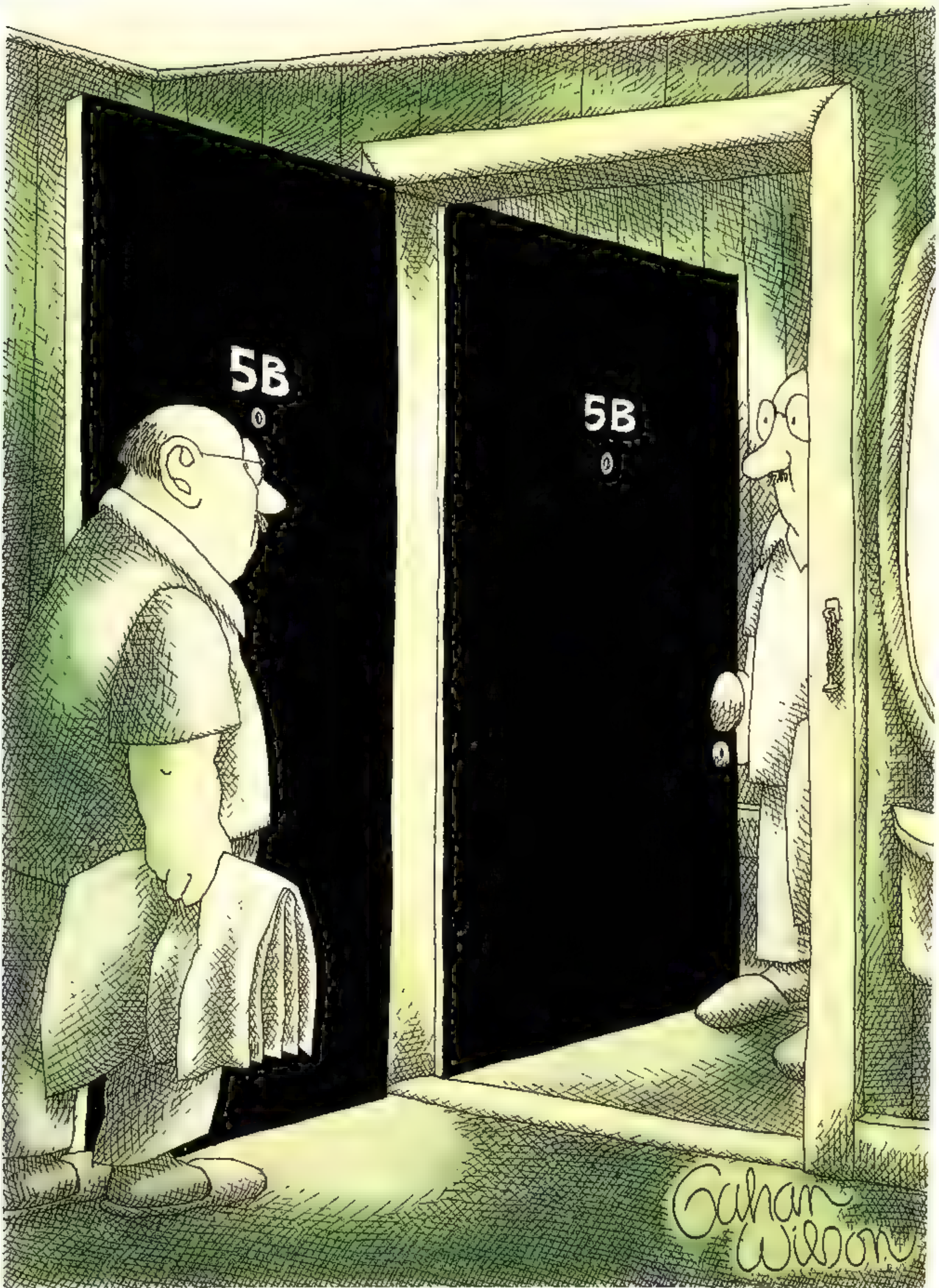
"So last Christmas it was those Cabbage Patch Kids."



"My husband, of course, will want a den."

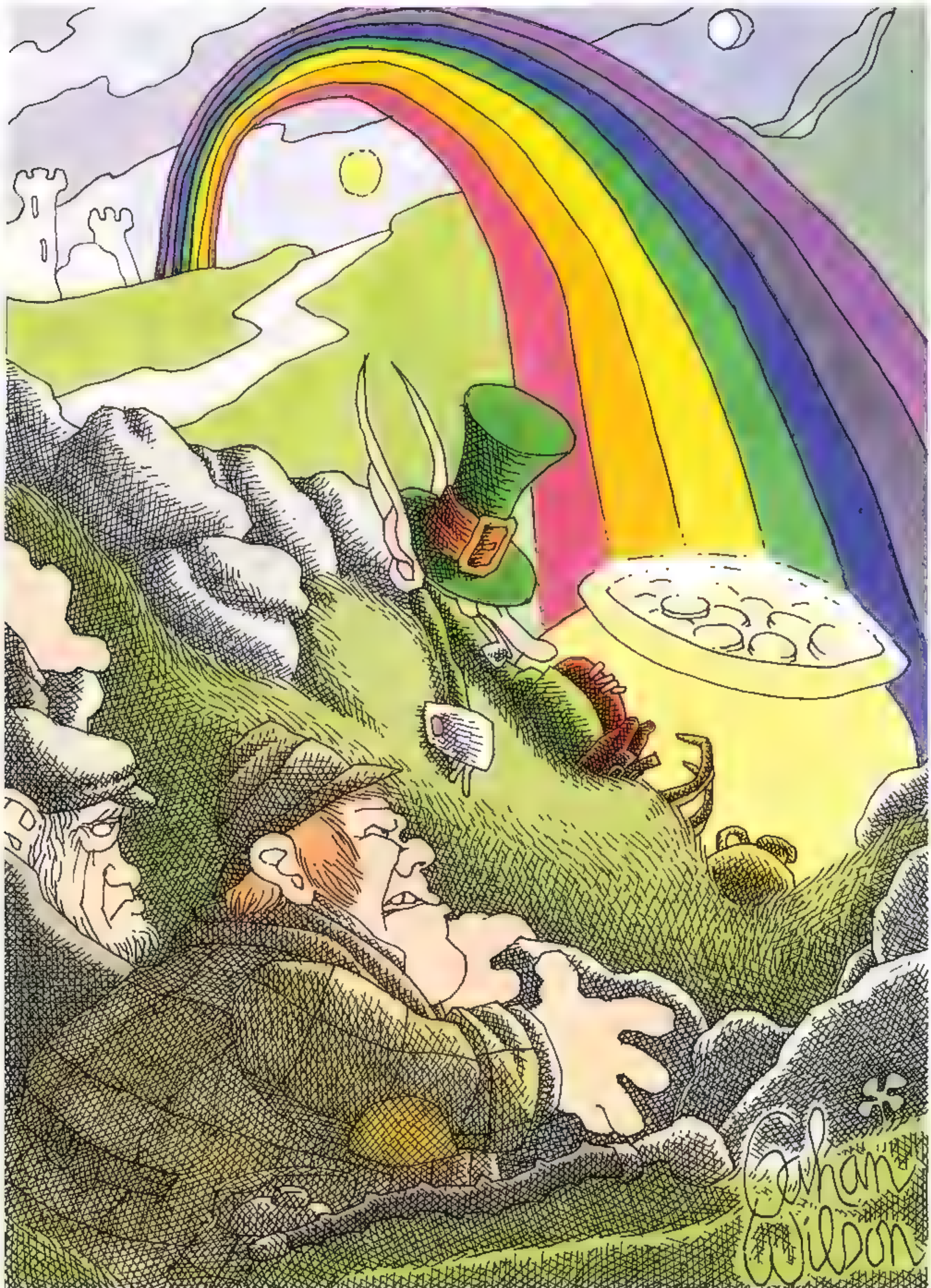


"You're gonna be happy to learn your husband's annual overnight disappearances have a perfectly innocent explanation, Mrs. Claus."





*"Limited nuclear war, sir, is where people
like you and me survive."*



"Of course, it may be one of those sting operations!"



*"With the wearing of this mystic talisman, you will never be
plagued by any of the minor ailments usually handled
by over-the-counter drugs!"*



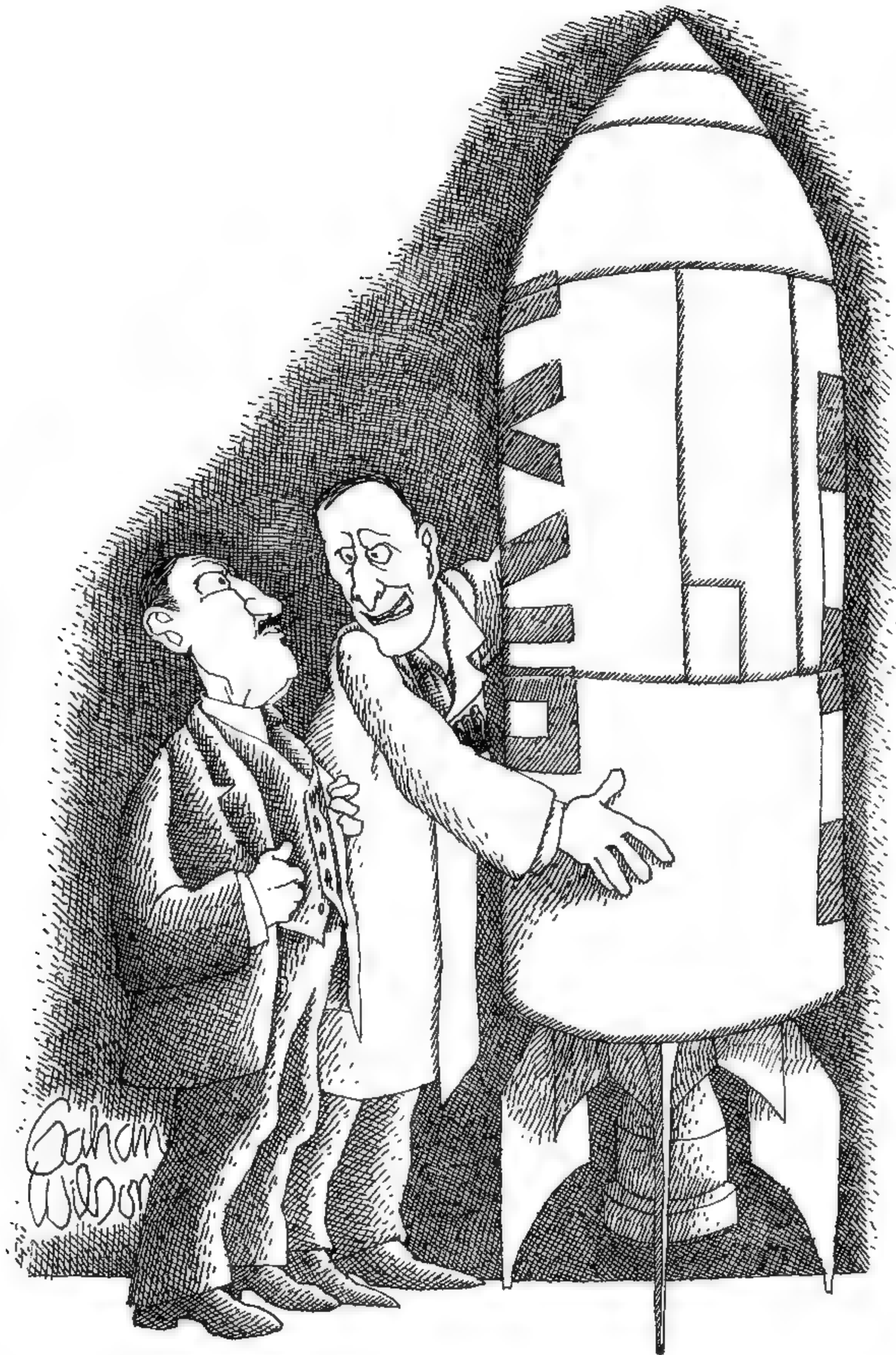
"What the hell, sweetheart—if you want it, it's yours!"



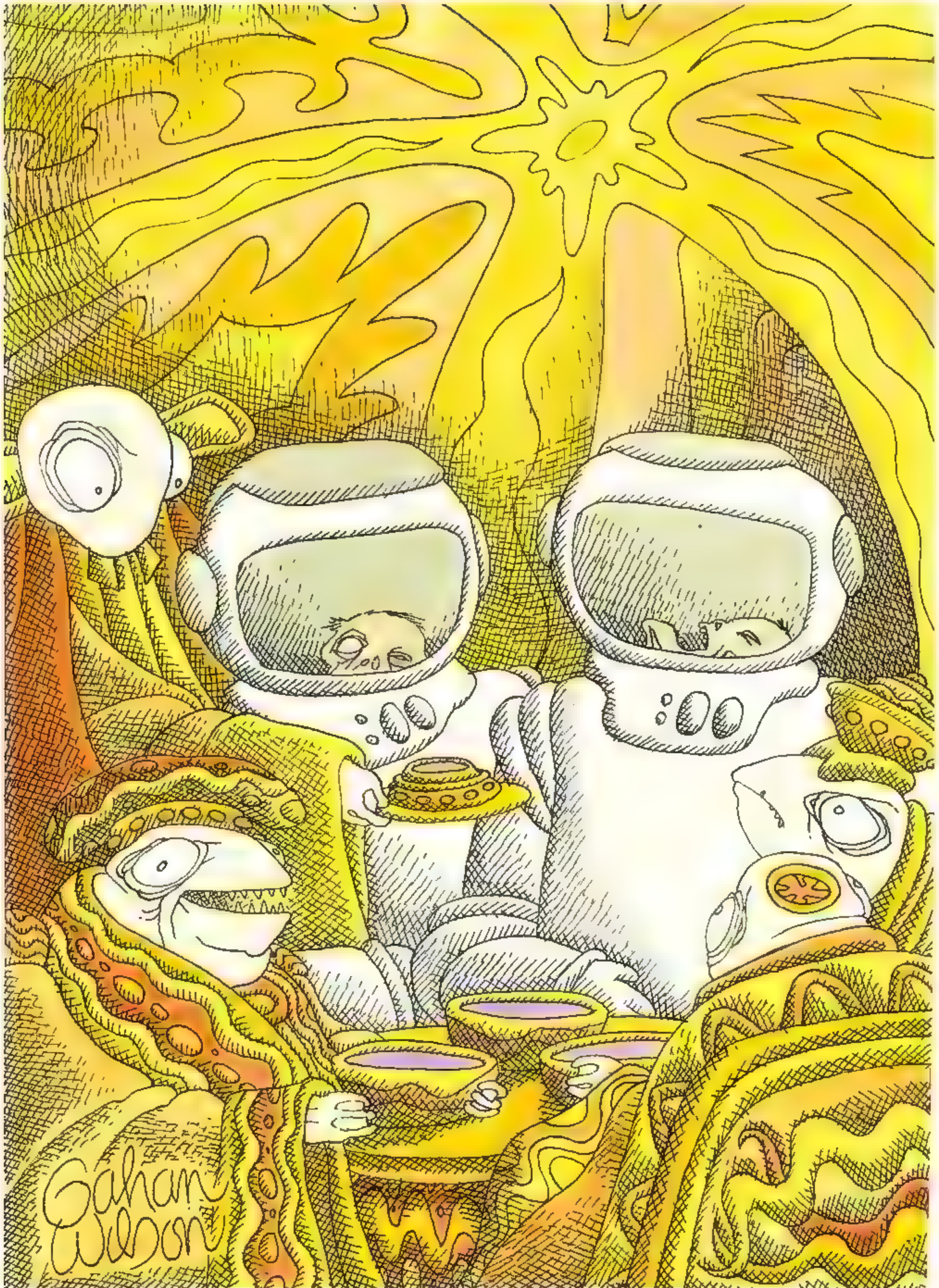
"Perhaps this one, sir."



"I kind of like you in these moods, Phil!"



*"State of the art, sir—no matter where it hits,
it destroys the entire world."*



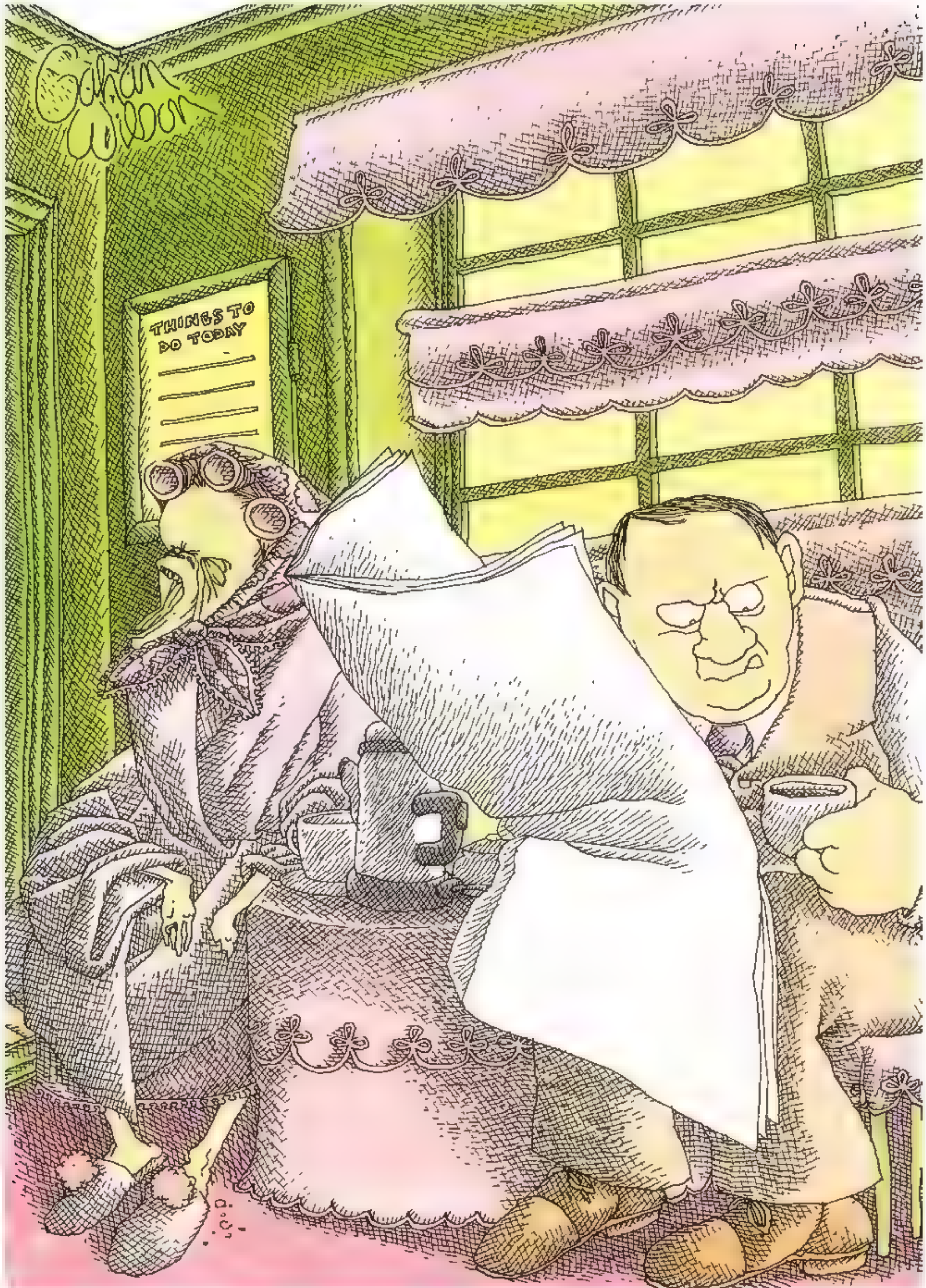
"They were pleasant enough at the beginning."



"It's very awkward when it sticks like that!"



"Gee, we have had the most awful luck with this room!"



"This coffee seems a little staler every morning, Edwina!"



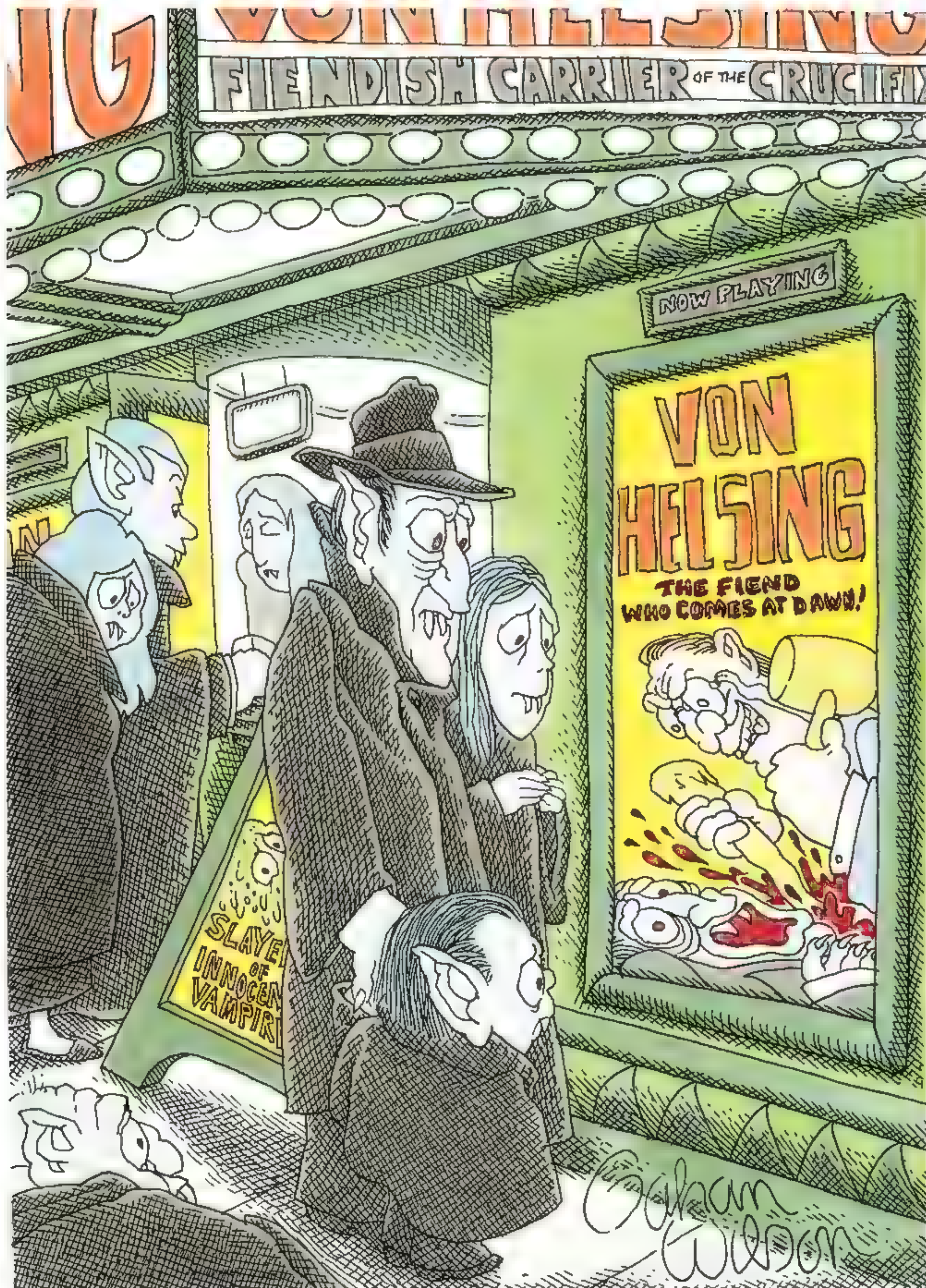
"And here's where we make toys for bad little boys and girls!"



"The kid's going to take the fall."



"So much for your idea of having a pet!"





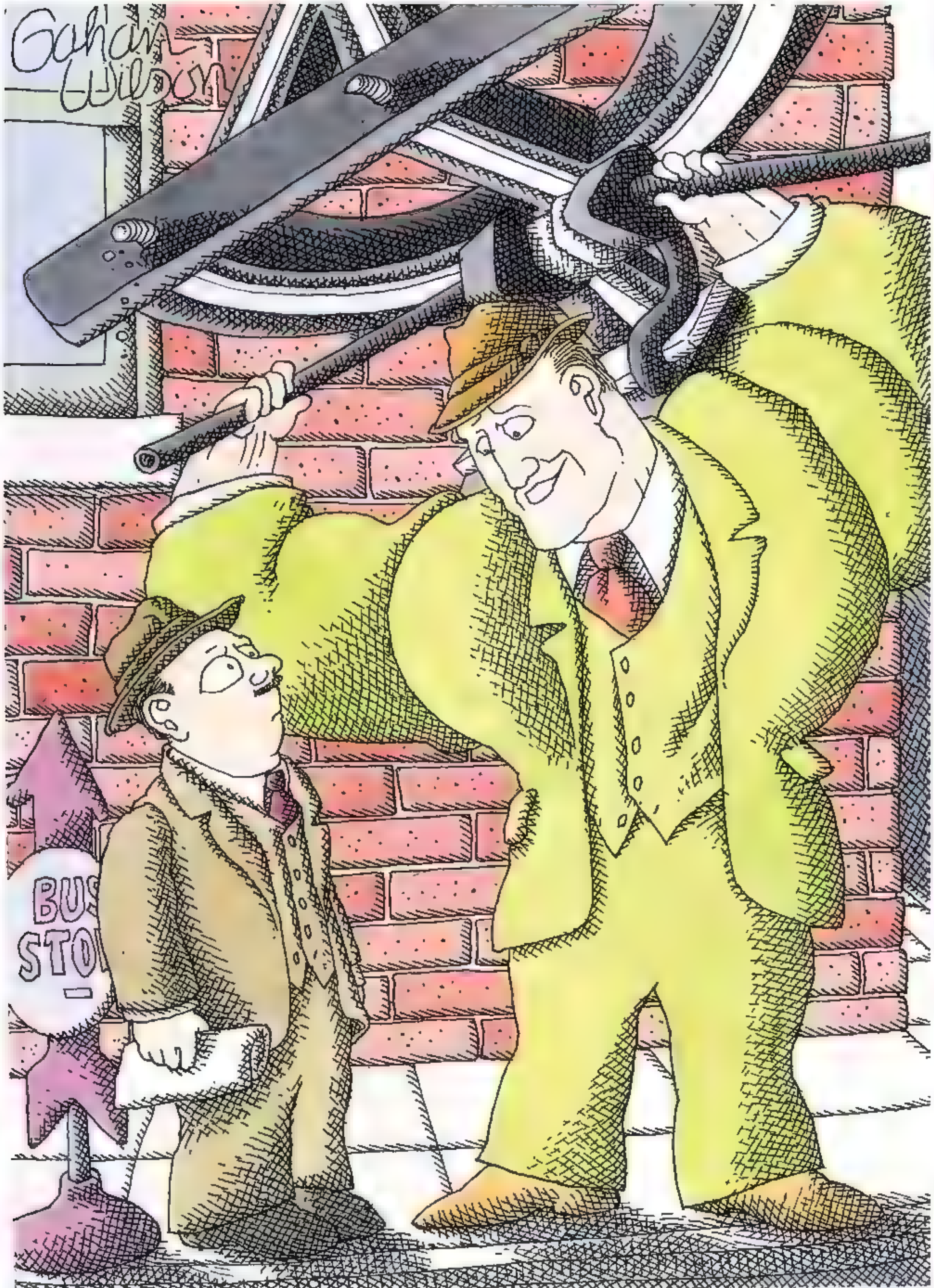
*"It appears the people of Atlantis not only had TV
but boring, stupid programming!"*



"Is this some kind of a put-on or what?"



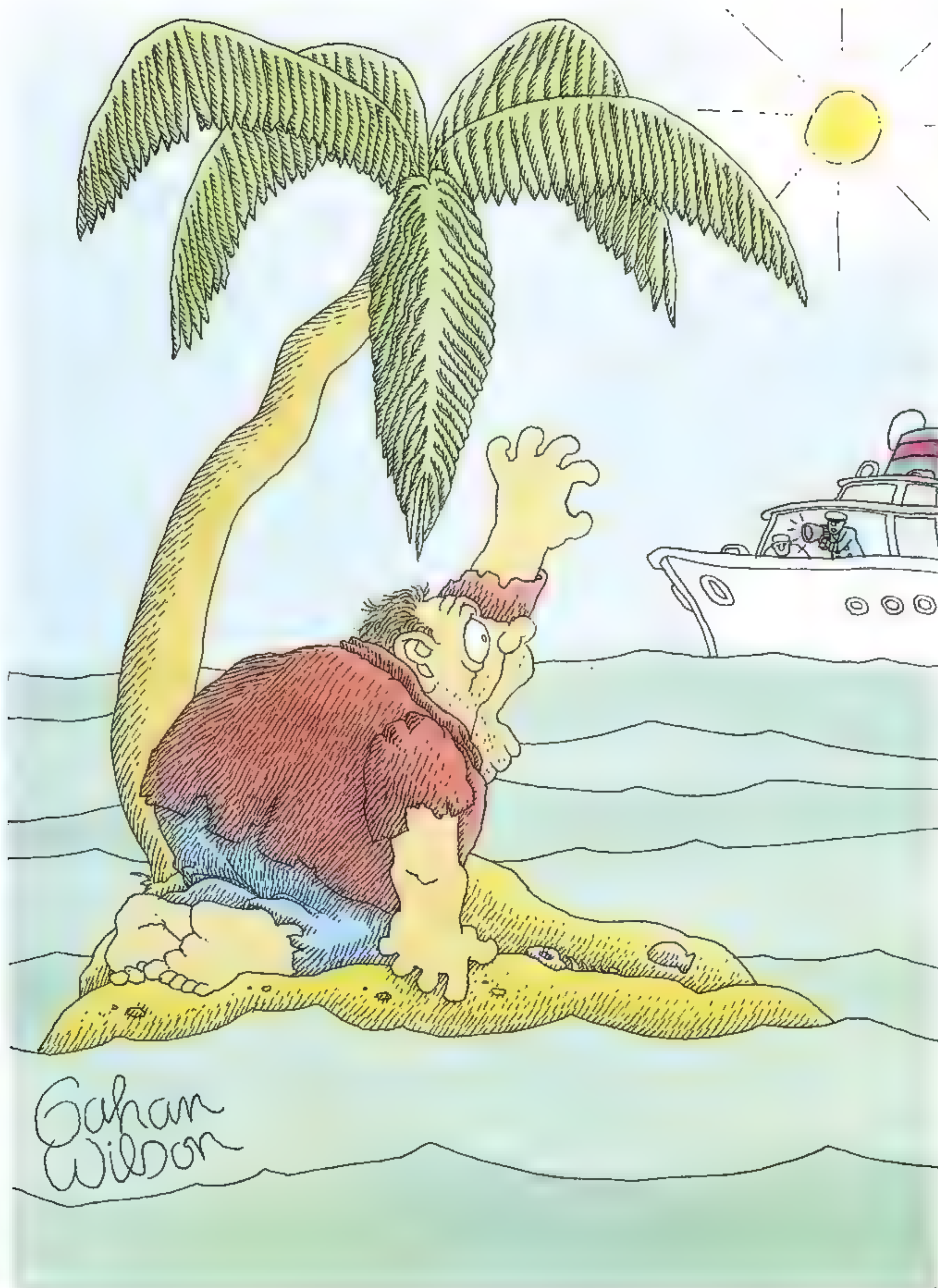
*"I'm beginning to suspect this may not be
anything so dignified as an attack."*



*"I used to keep my gym fastened to a wall in my apartment,
but now I carry it with me wherever I go!"*



"Chemical spill? What chemical spill? Anybody here know anything about a chemical spill?"



"How's the diet coming, Mr. Sims?"



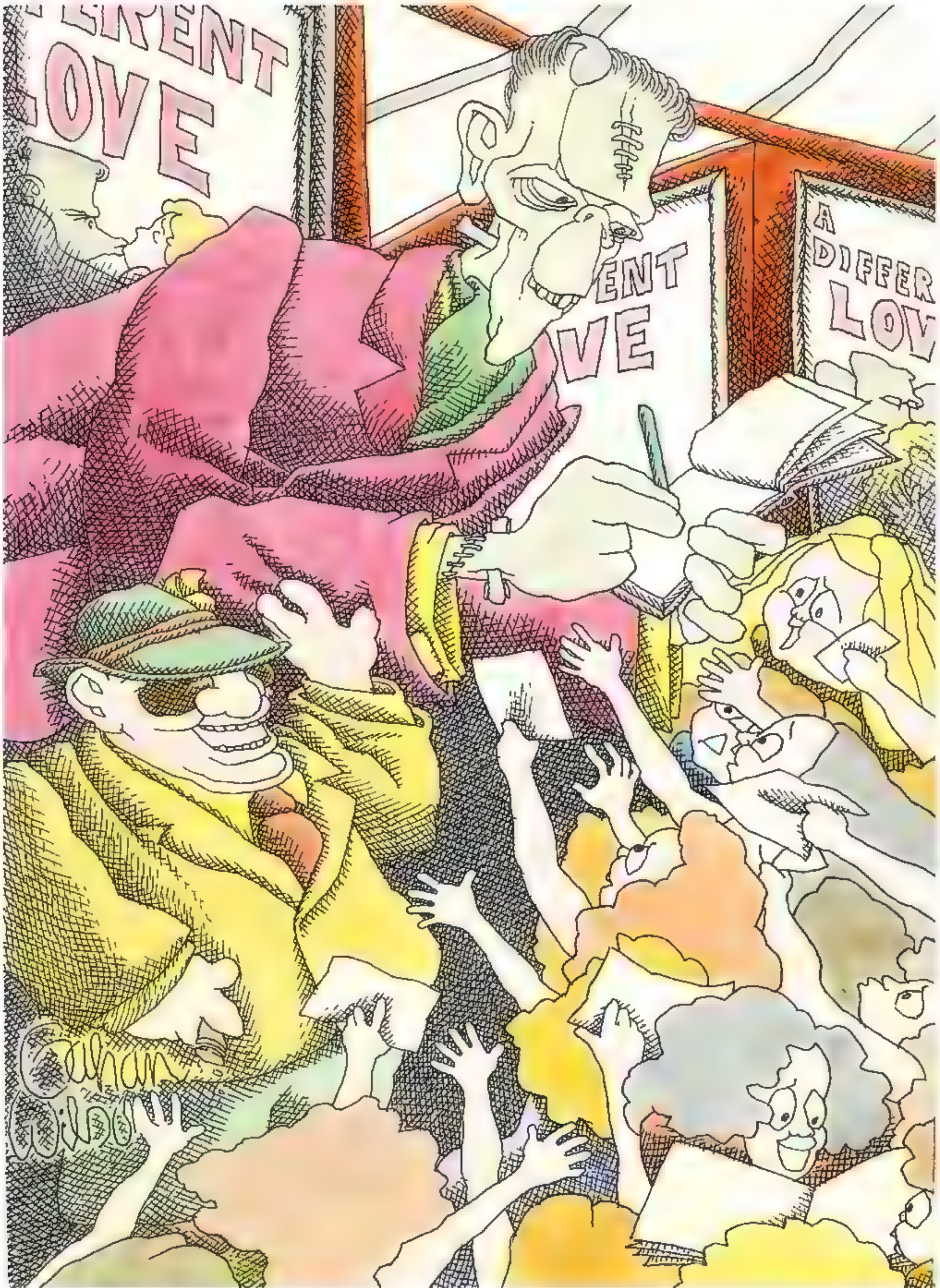
"Sure is nice to have the summer people gone!"

Handwritten scribble

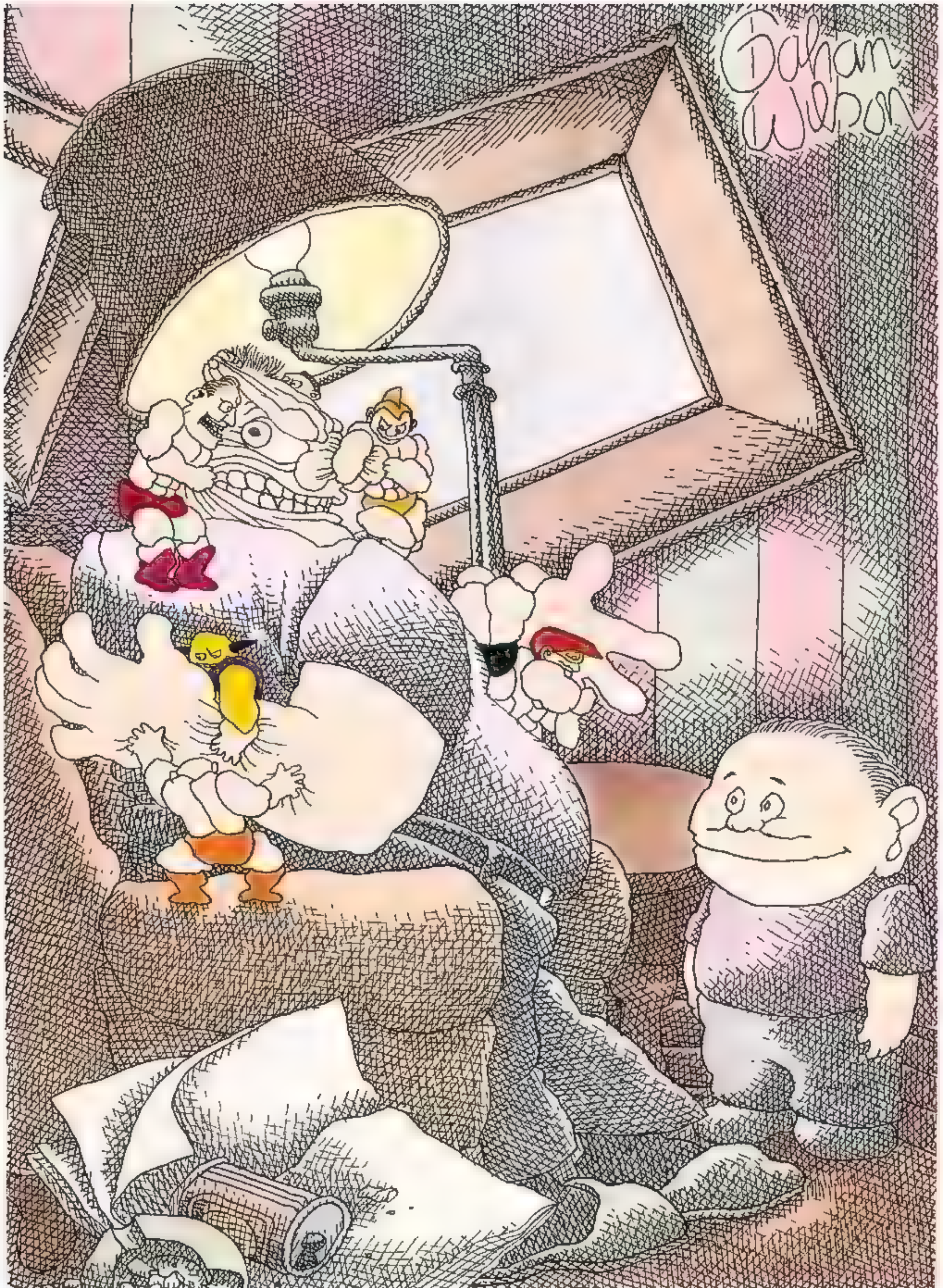
"NOT ONLY DO I
CURSE YOU, BUT YOUR
DESCENDENTS ALSO."

Handwritten scribble

Large handwritten signature or scribble



"What can I say, kid? I never thought you'd make it out of horror movies!"



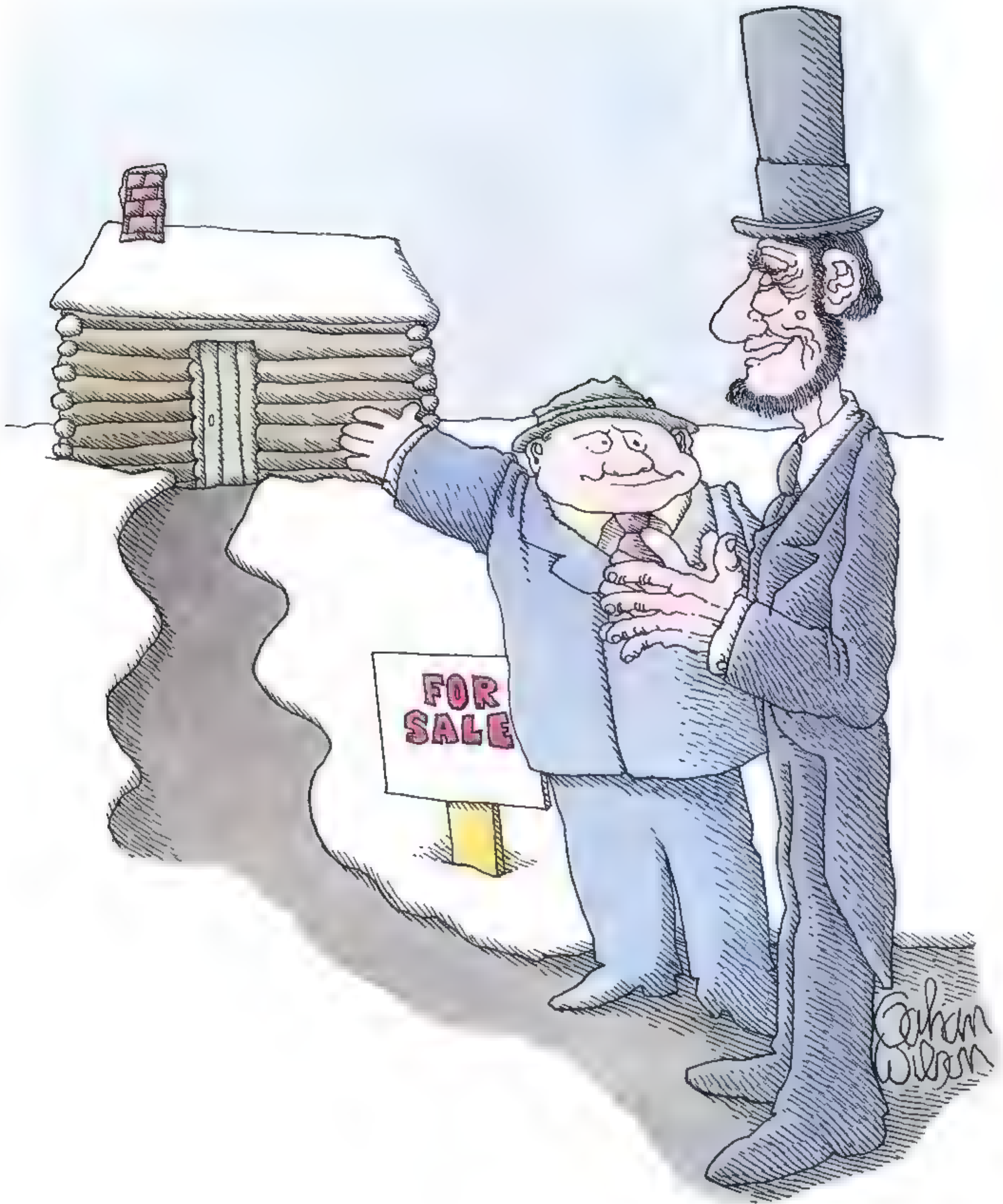
"I'm sure you want little Jimmy to have a complete set of 'Muscular Heroes of the Cosmos,' now, don't you, Mr. Bennett?"



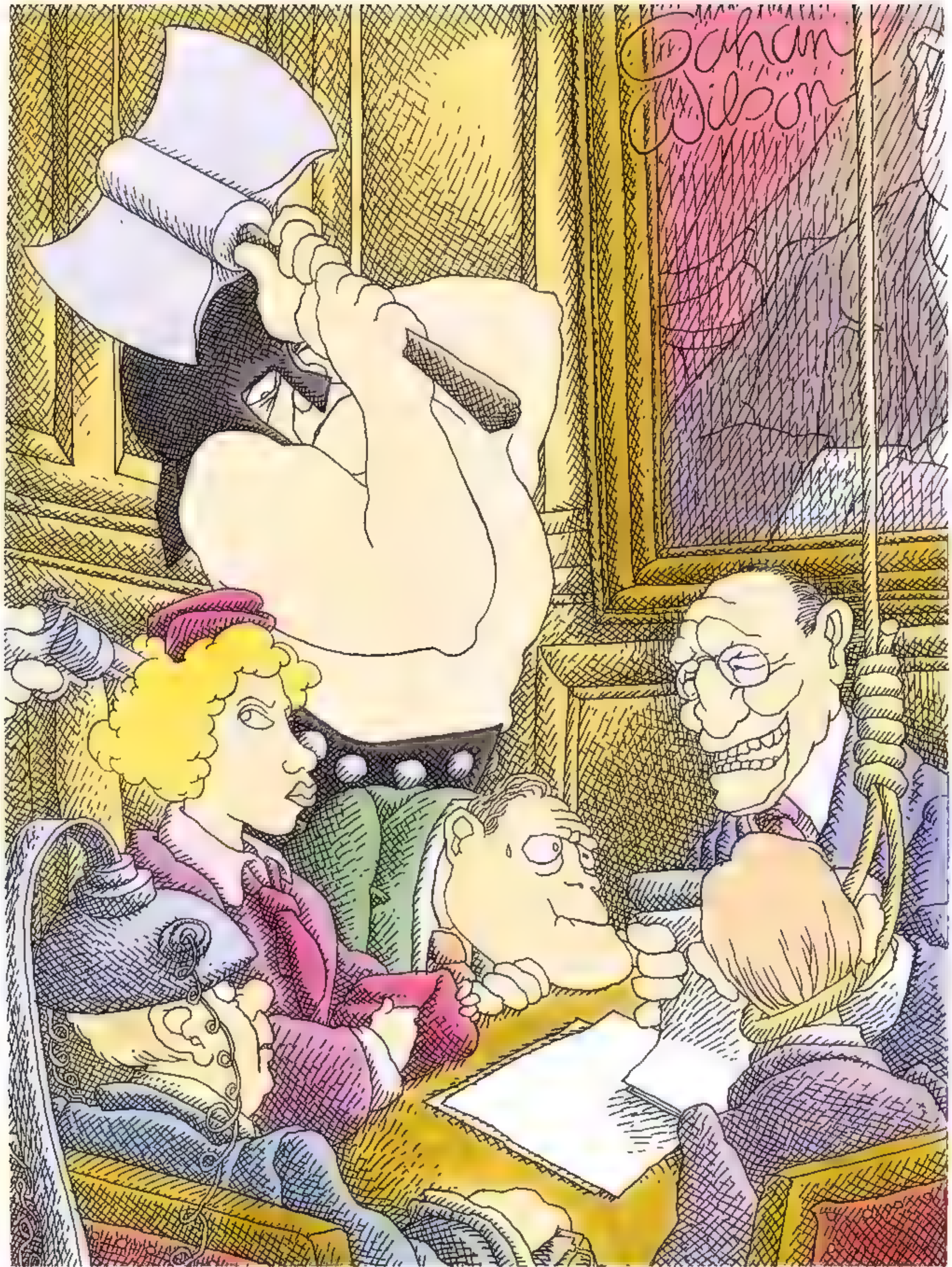
*"And when you're older, Tiny Tim, I'll see to it
that you get plenty of girls!"*



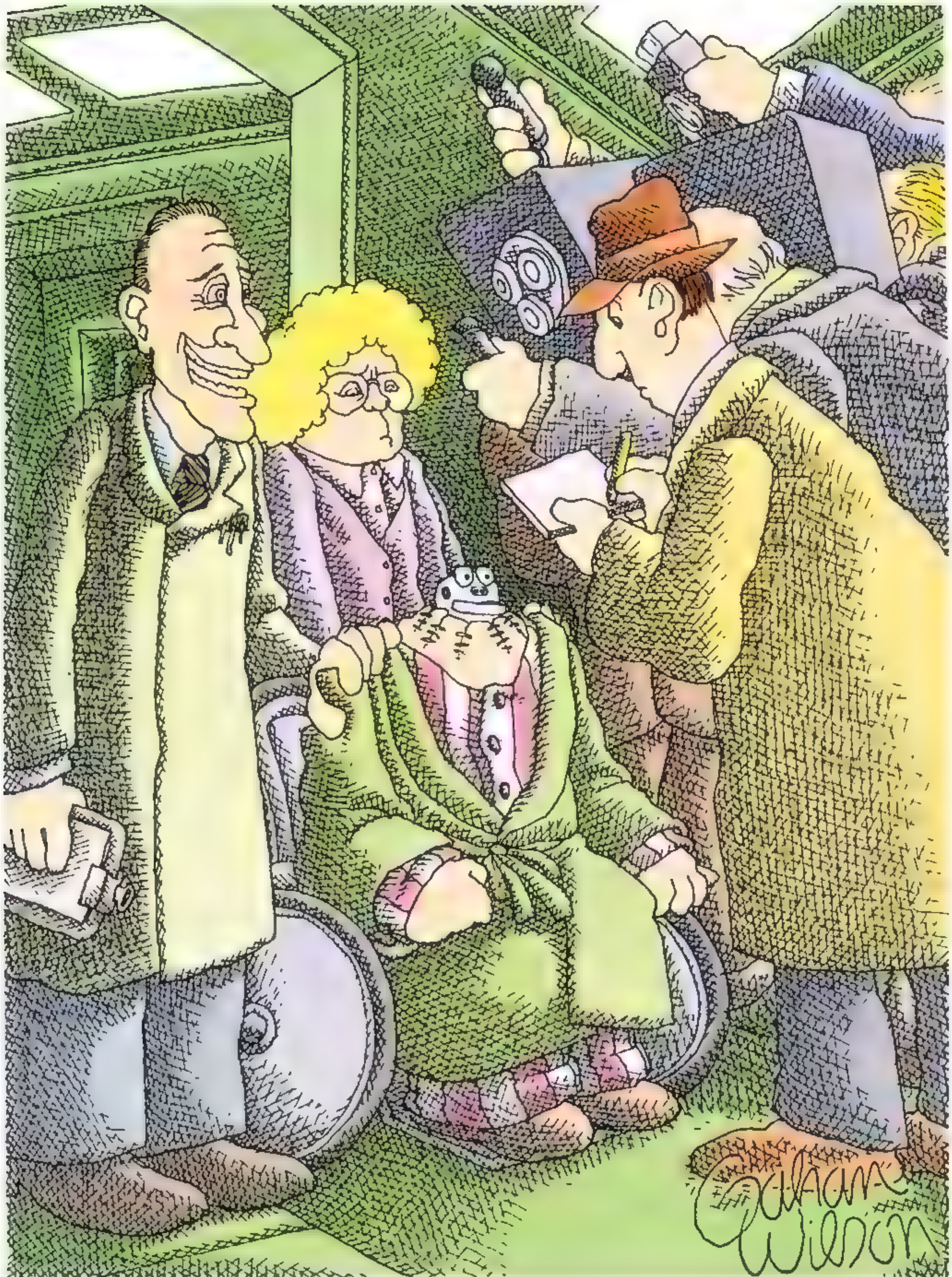
"From now on, you guys take your orders from me, see?"



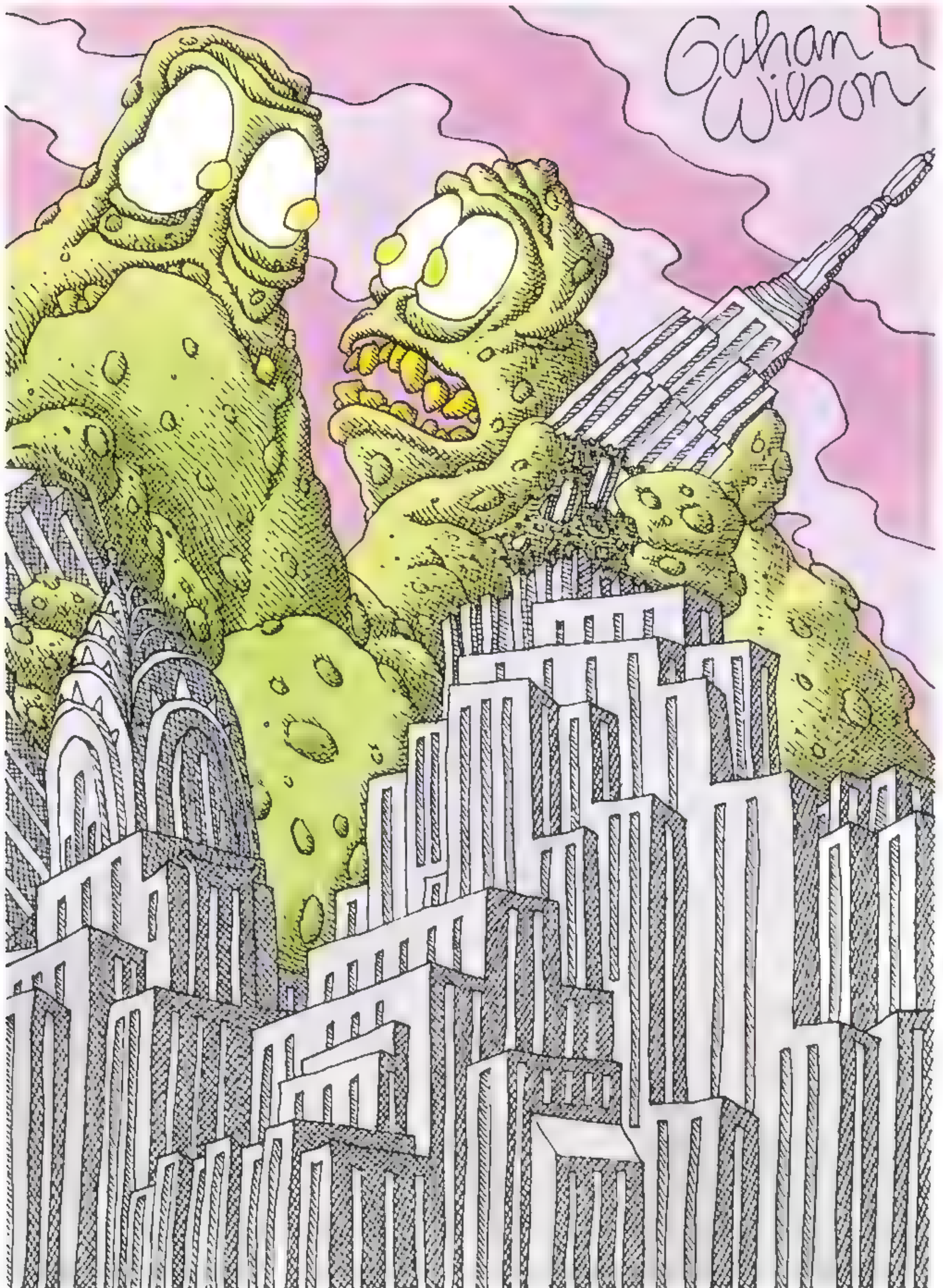
"Perfect!"



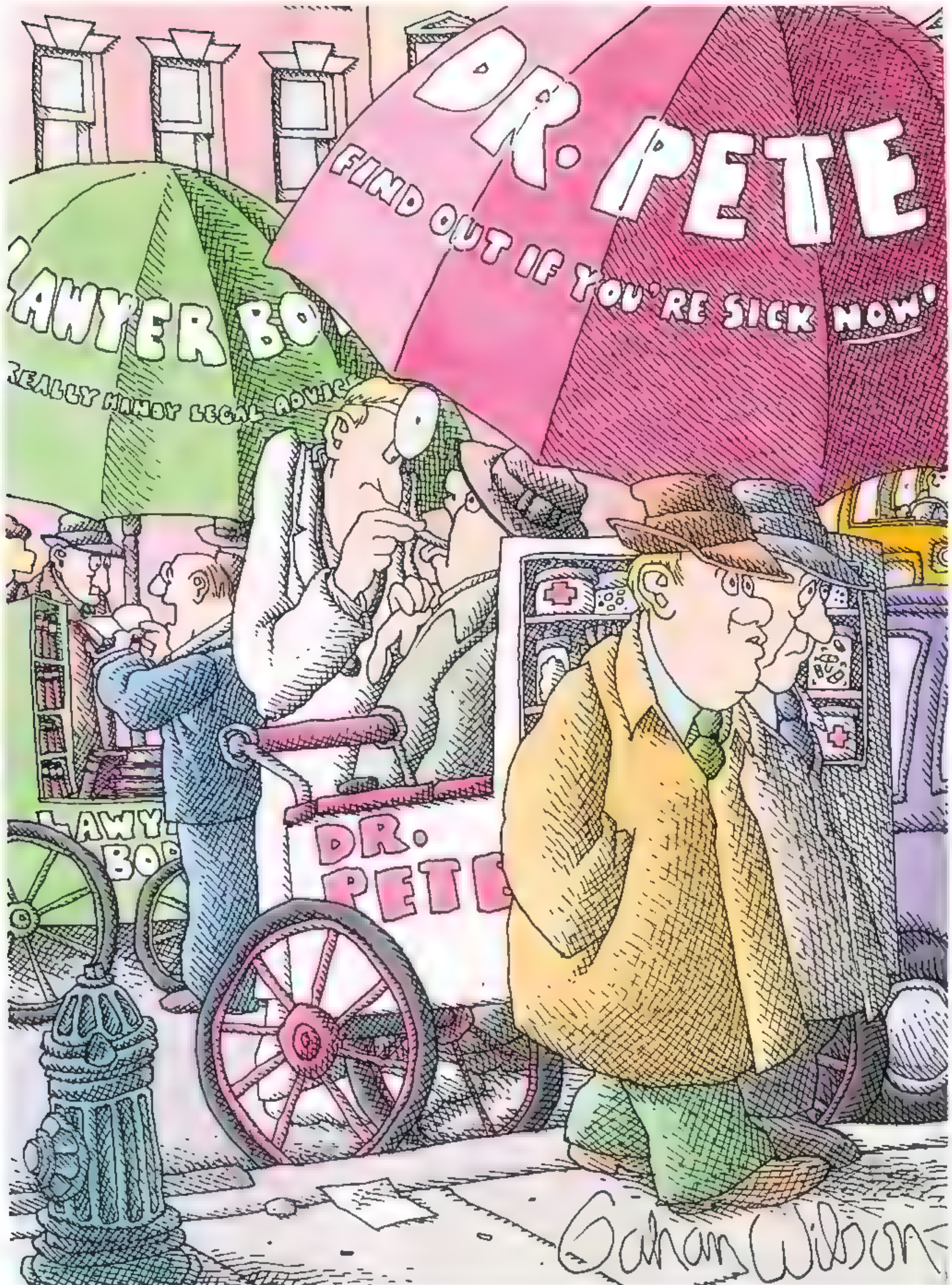
*"Before we begin, I'd like to say that in thirty years as an attorney,
I've never encountered a more interesting departure from
the standard last will and testament."*



"Mr. Ferguson would be delighted to tell you how happy he is with the mechanical head we've given him, only its little jaw is stuck."



"The whole thing's much smaller than it seemed on TV."



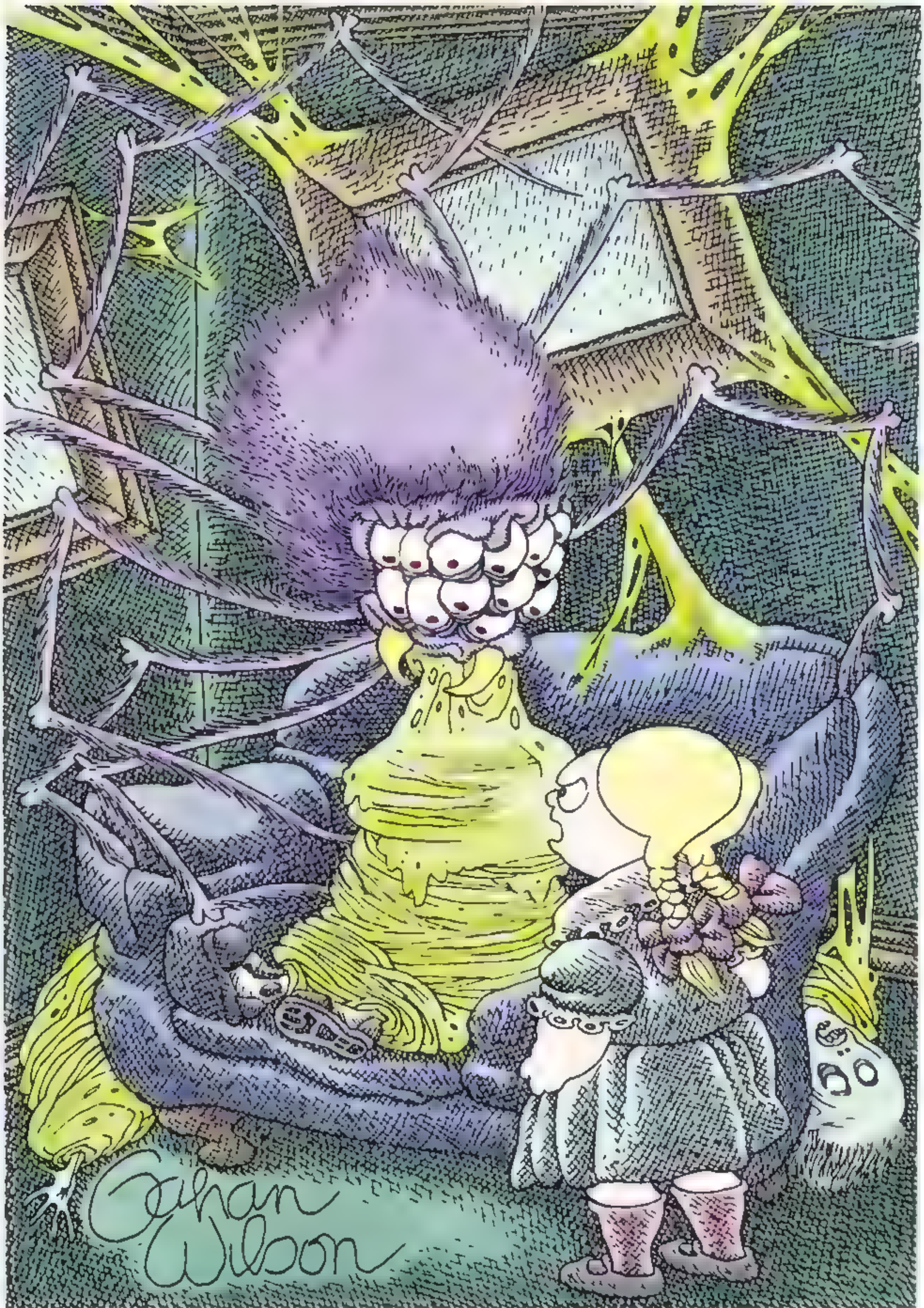
"I suppose it was bound to come to this."



*"Of course, lack of discipline is a major problem
in raising free-range chickens!"*



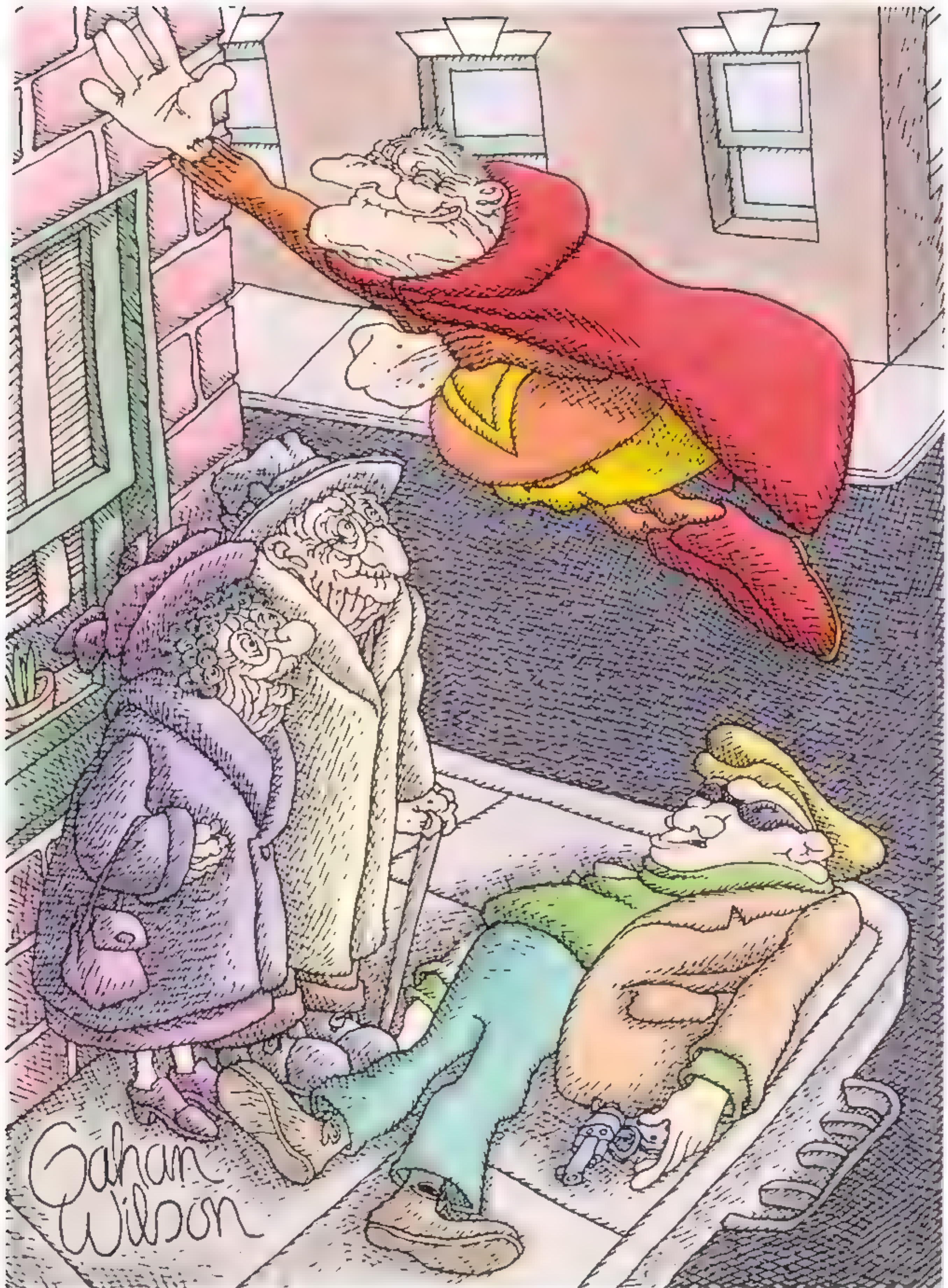
*"We sure appreciate your doing all you can to make
the weather interesting, Herb!"*



*"I won't bring any more friends home unless you
let me play with them first!"*



"I can't imagine why no one ever thought of it before!"

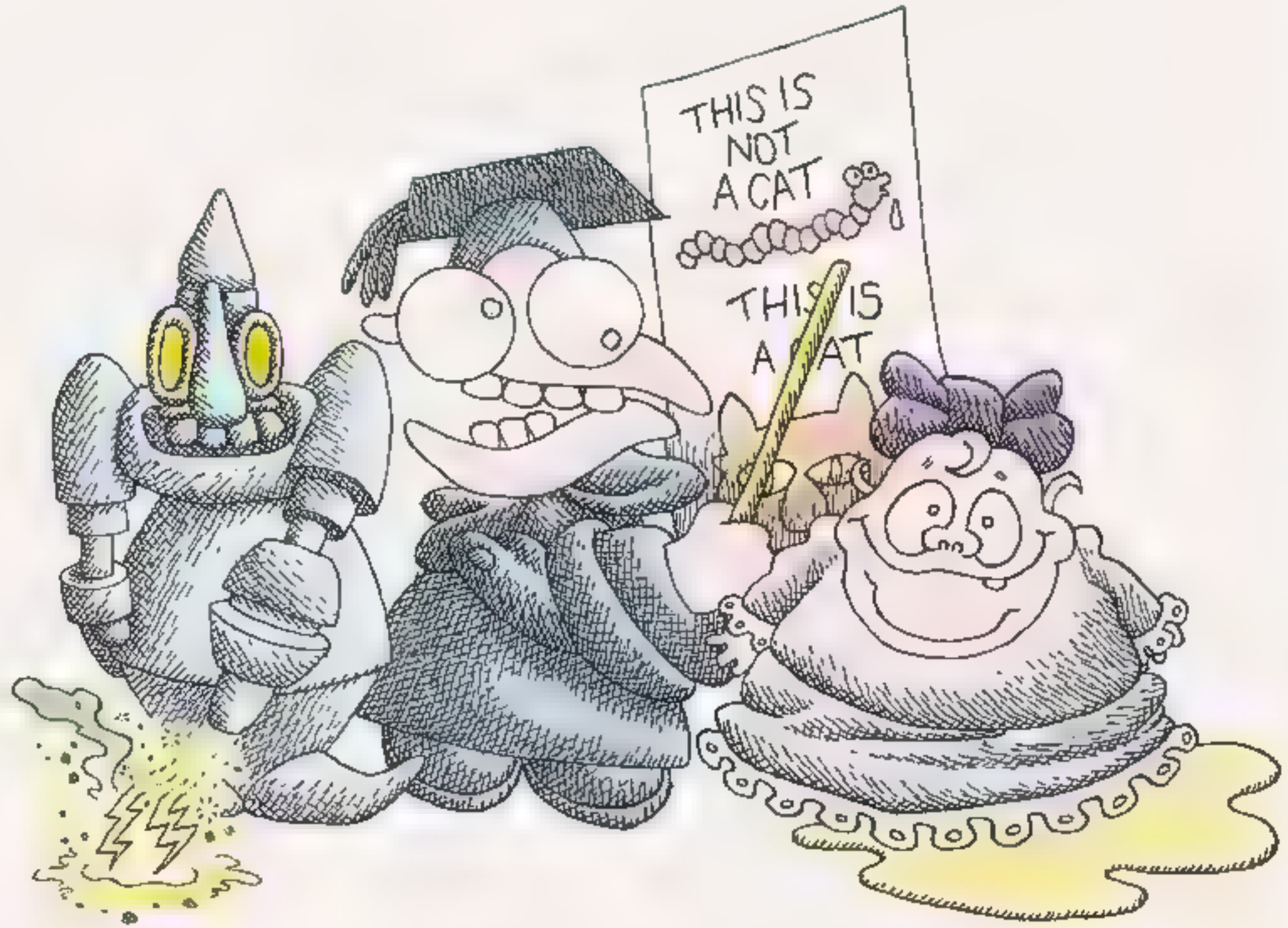


*"Well, it certainly is nice to know someone's
looking out for us old folks!"*

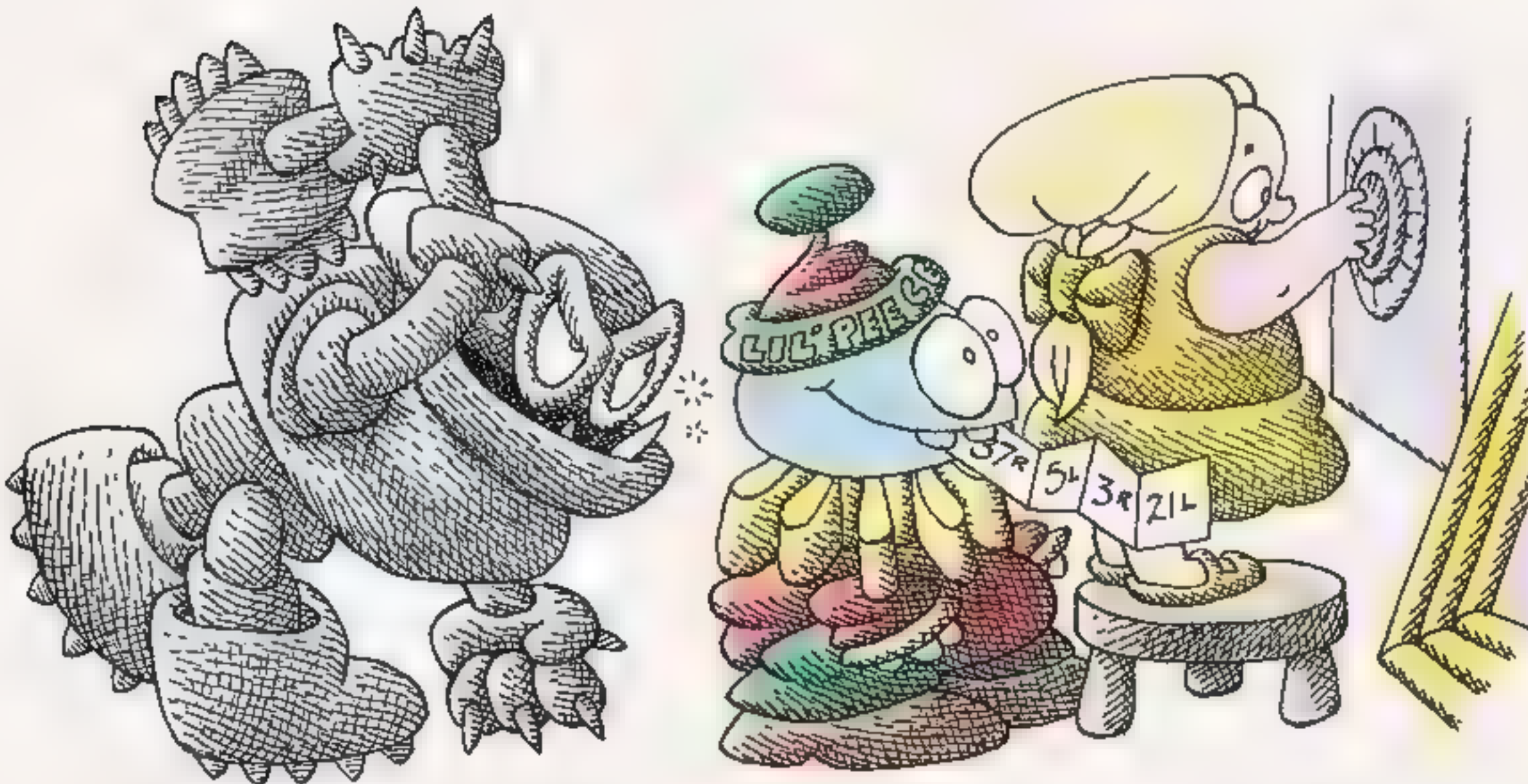
THE SUBSTITUTES by Gahan Wilson

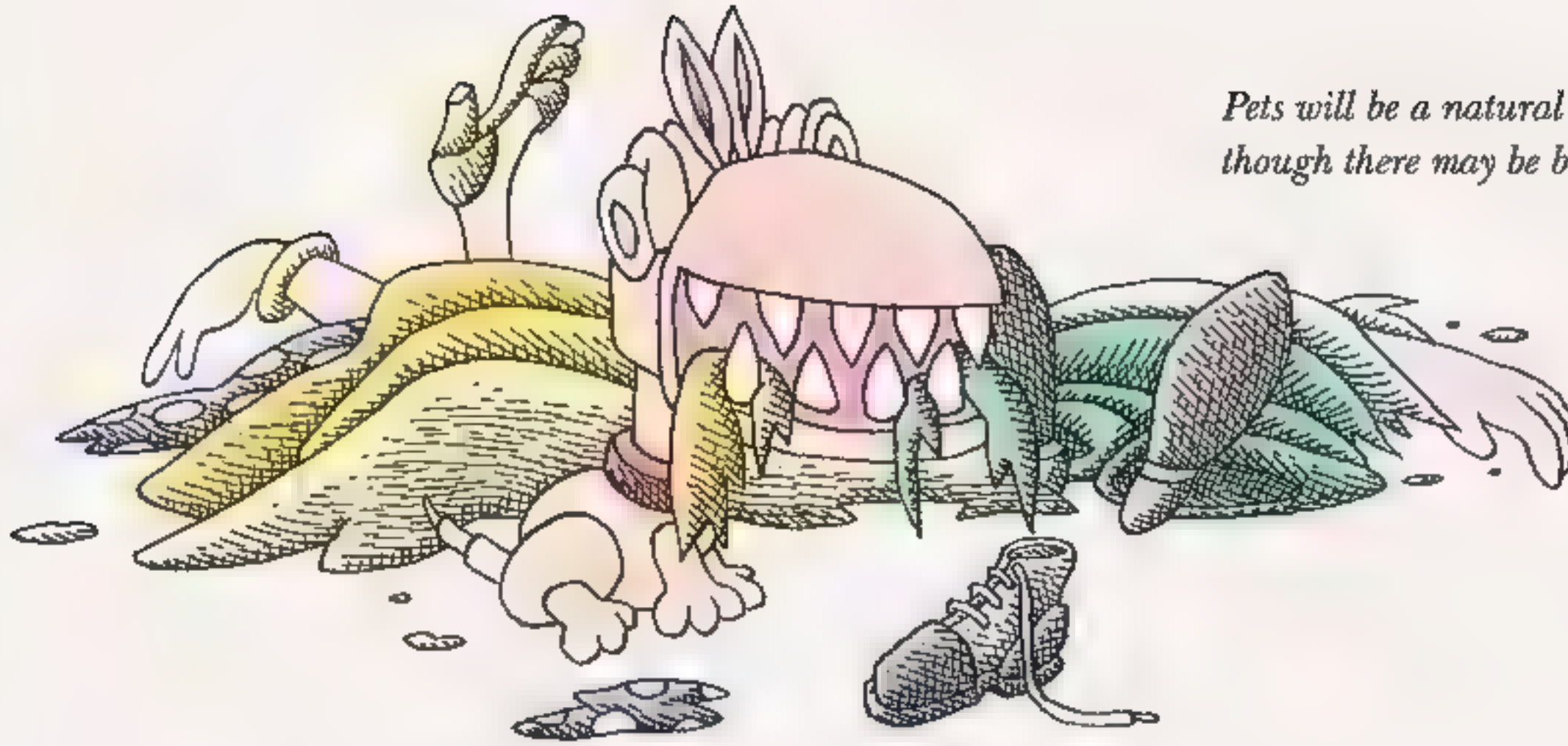
The most optimistic scientists agree that massive overcrowding is just getting started (wait until we all try to pack ourselves aboard the spaceship!), and it's just begun to dawn on us that many living creatures we enjoy or need are space wasting and could easily be replaced with computerized, mechanical substitutes.

We all wanted childhood friends, sure, but they often ate cookies we expected to eat, and they selfishly refused to let us play with their toys, so we often had to beat them, which made them bleed or swell up, and that got us into serious trouble with adults. Now American know-how is developing a wide variety of robot chums that will talk to kids, follow them around on cute little feet or treads and even urinate on them.

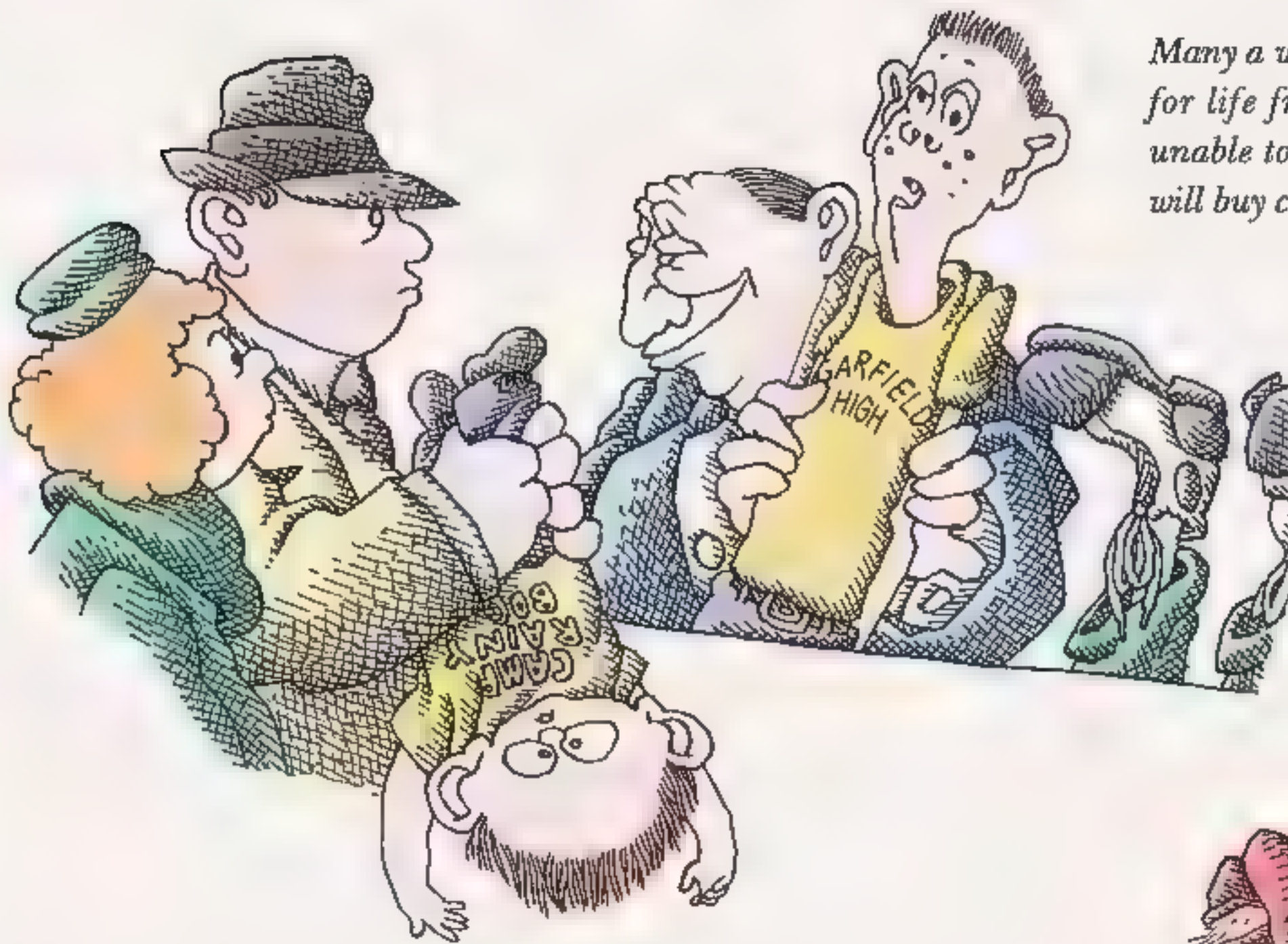


Of course, the experimental models they come up with next may now and then get a mite too clever, but they'll be awfully surprised to learn that Daddy has bought a little gadget of his own to cover that eventuality.



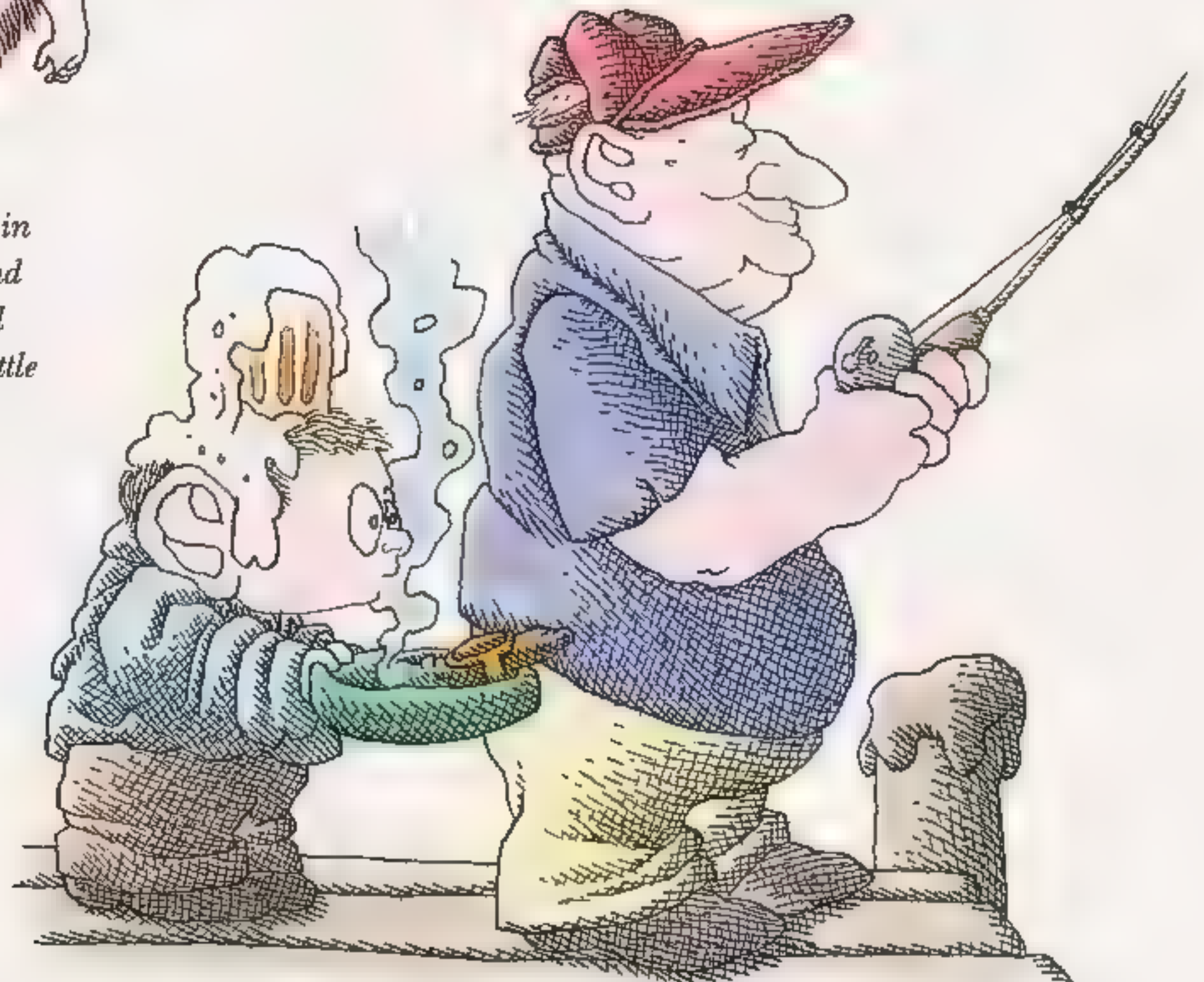


Pets will be a natural for mechanical replacement, though there may be bugs in the earlier devices.

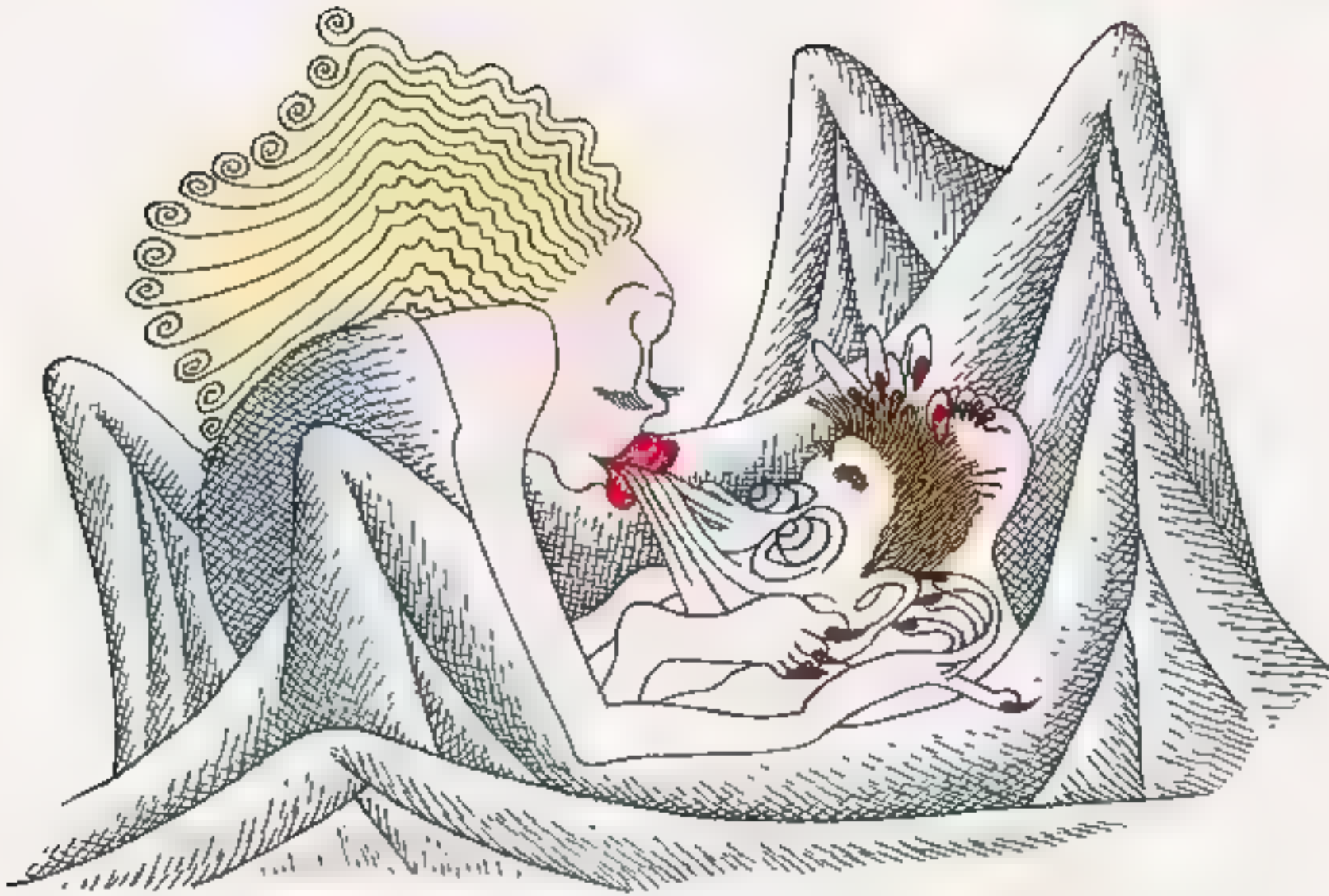
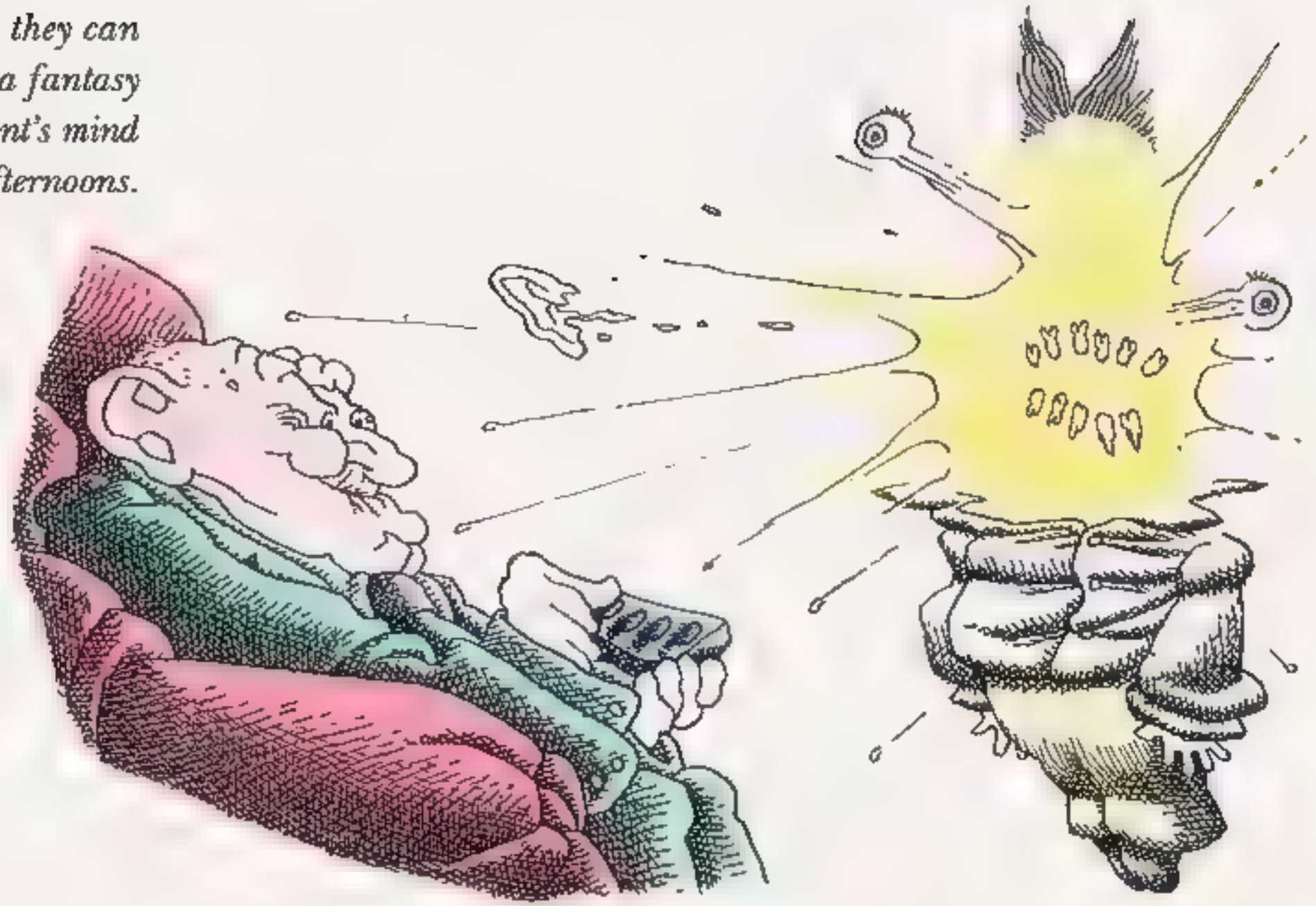


Many a would-be mom and pop, debt-ridden for life from their college education and unable to afford flesh-and-blood offspring, will buy computerized adolescents.

Later, when the pretend parents get on in years and feel like playing Grandpa and Grandma, they can trade their matured offspring back in for a fresh new set of little tots, which will make appealing walking planters and handy mobile end tables....

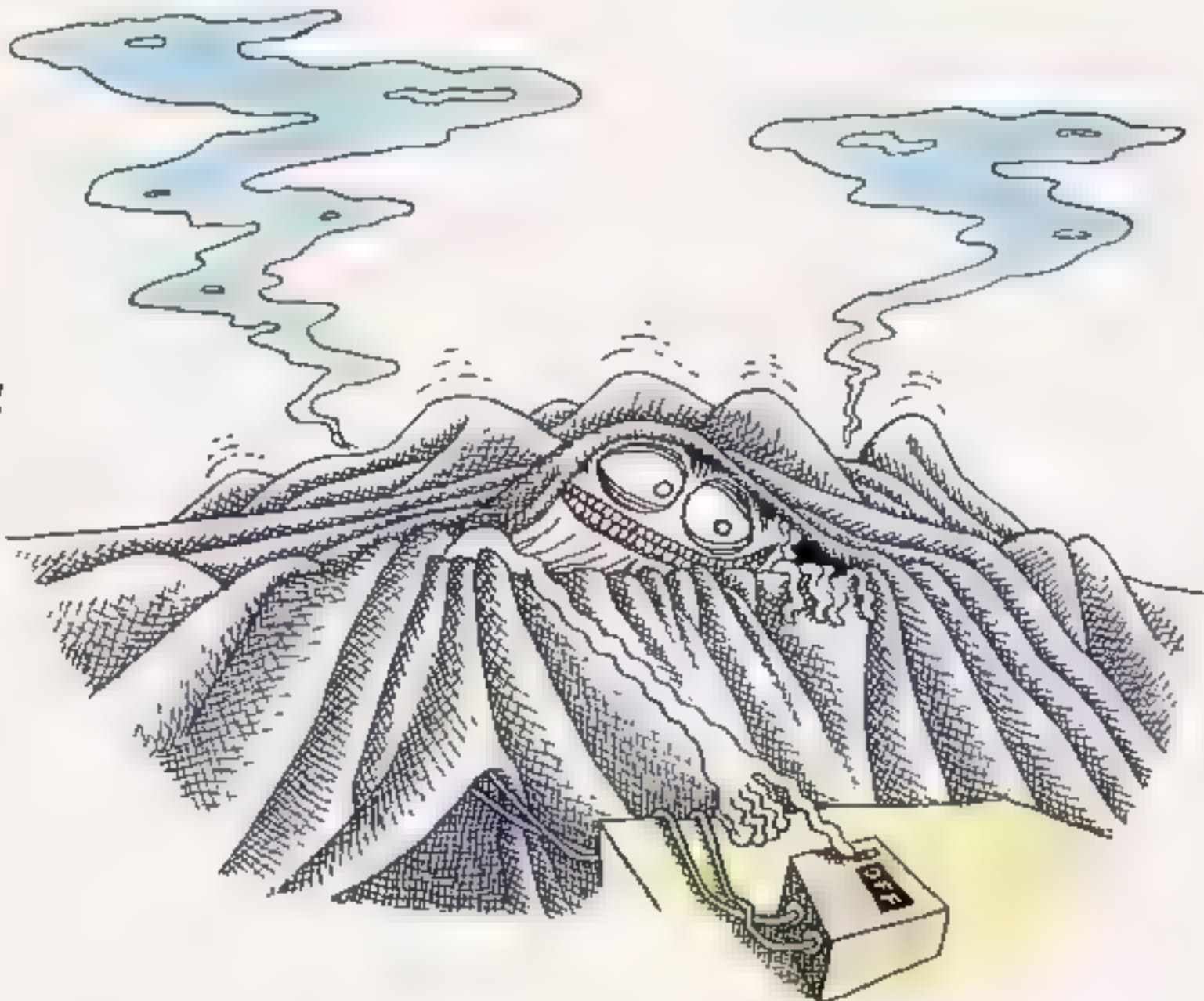


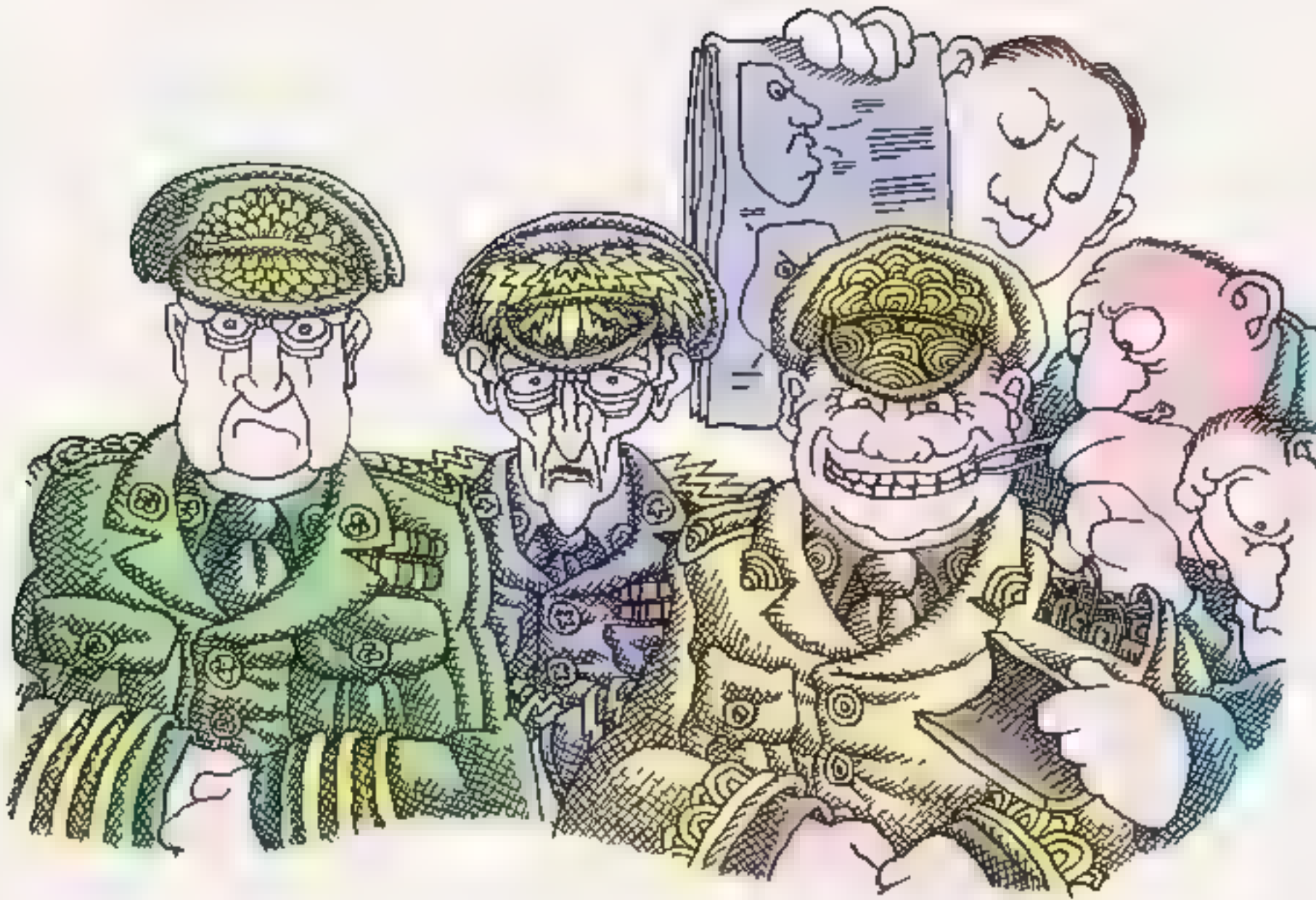
And if the old folks get cranky, they can indulge themselves in acting out a fantasy that has crossed many a grandparent's mind on long, rainy afternoons.



The wildest and most glorious imaginations of men will at last be realized when customized, perfect lovers come onto the market. They will be programmed with the "Kama Sutra," just for starters...

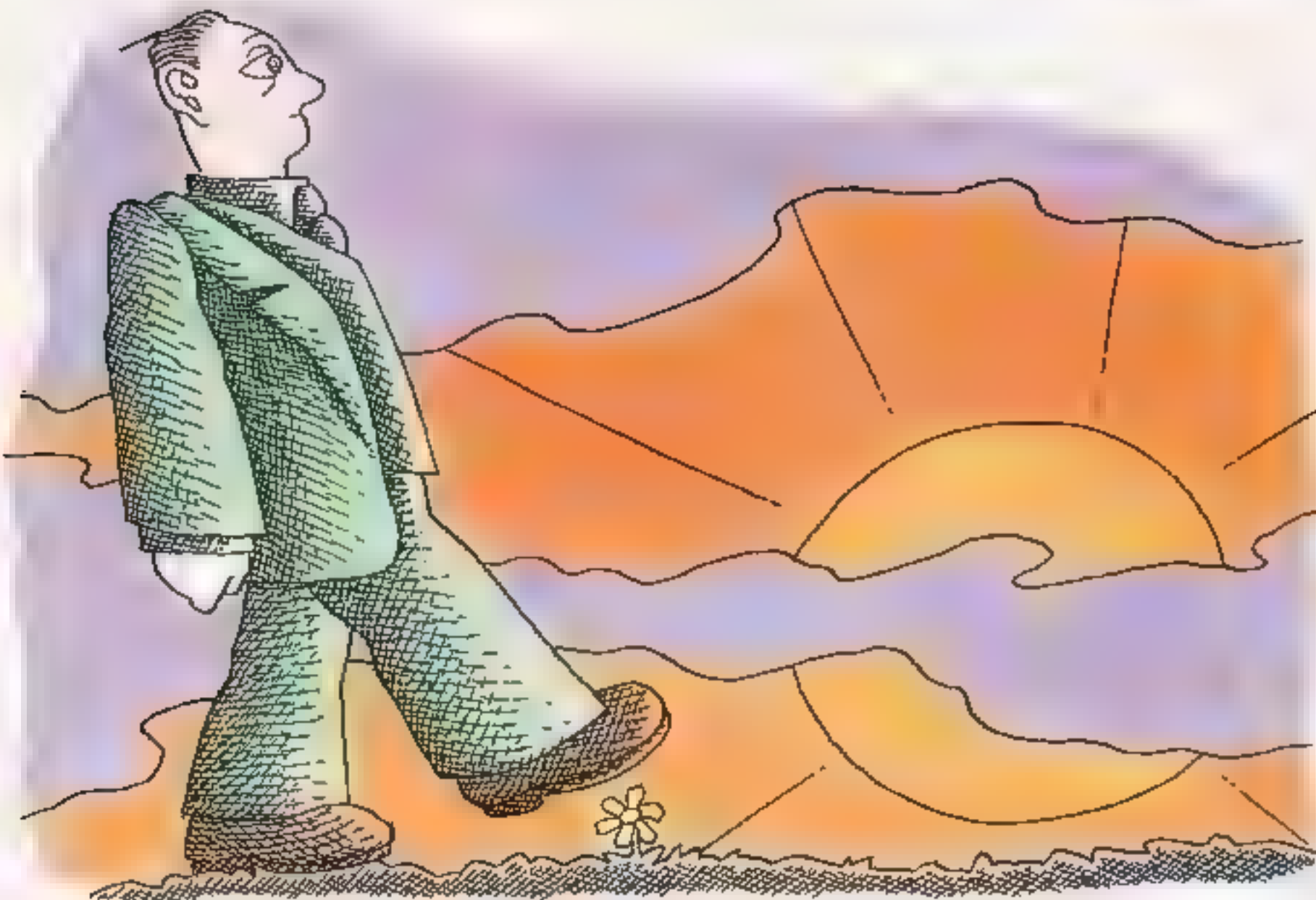
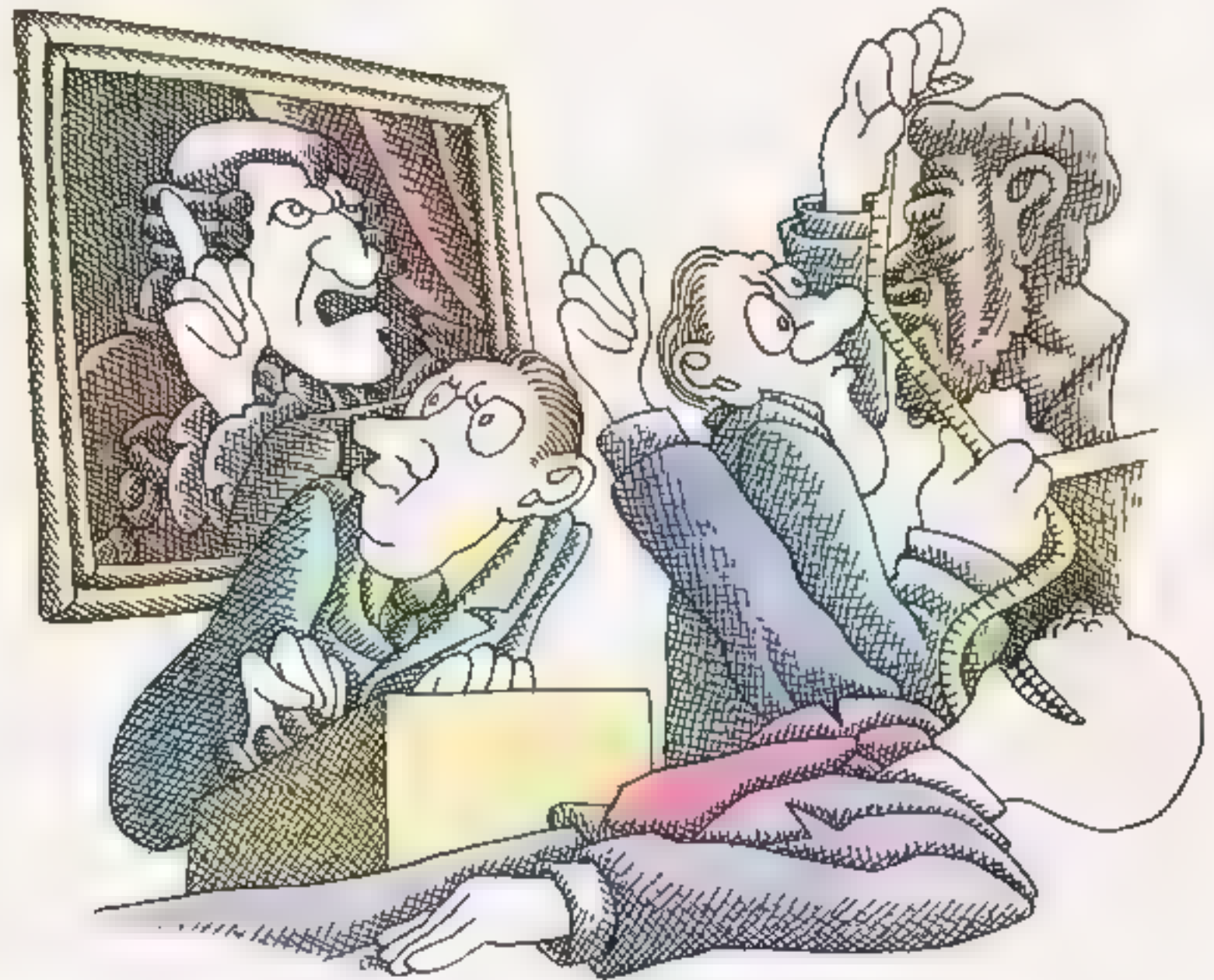
And, of course, they will all have built-in rheostats.





The Pentagon will be computerized, though not without some flawed prototypes at the start.

Politics will finally be perfected when political offices are held by genuinely artificial mayors, congressmen and, yes—most decidedly—presidents.



In the end, we will all be replaced by tidier replicas of ourselves, and in many ways it will be a great improvement: All the trains will finally run on time; the streets of our cities will be spotlessly clean; and there will be no starvation anywhere in all the world, except for the occasional power failure.

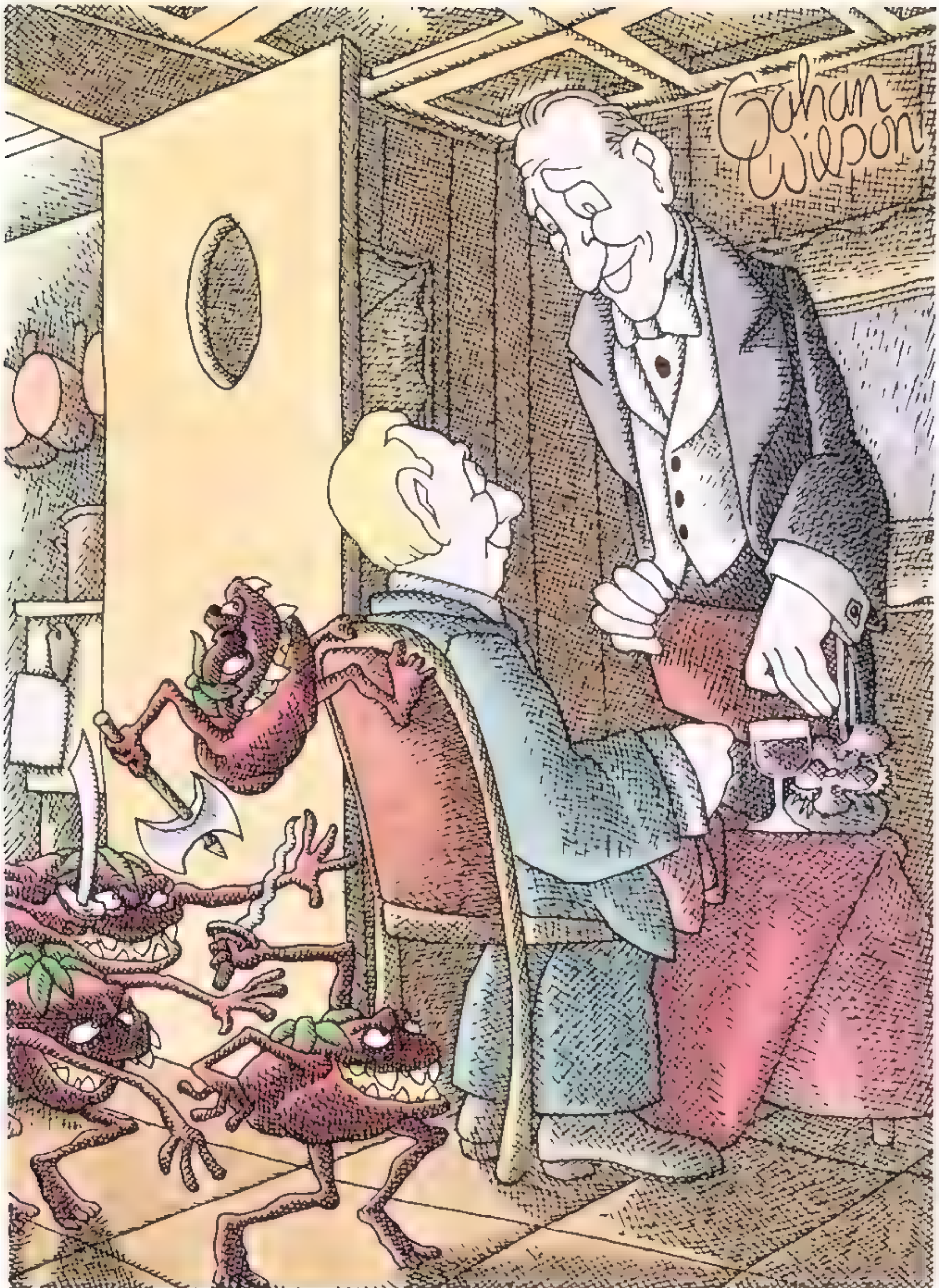
It's a pity no one will be there to notice.



"I'm sorry, Inspector Lestrade, but for reasons which I confess are sentimental, I feel I must, just this once, decline my services to Scotland Yard."



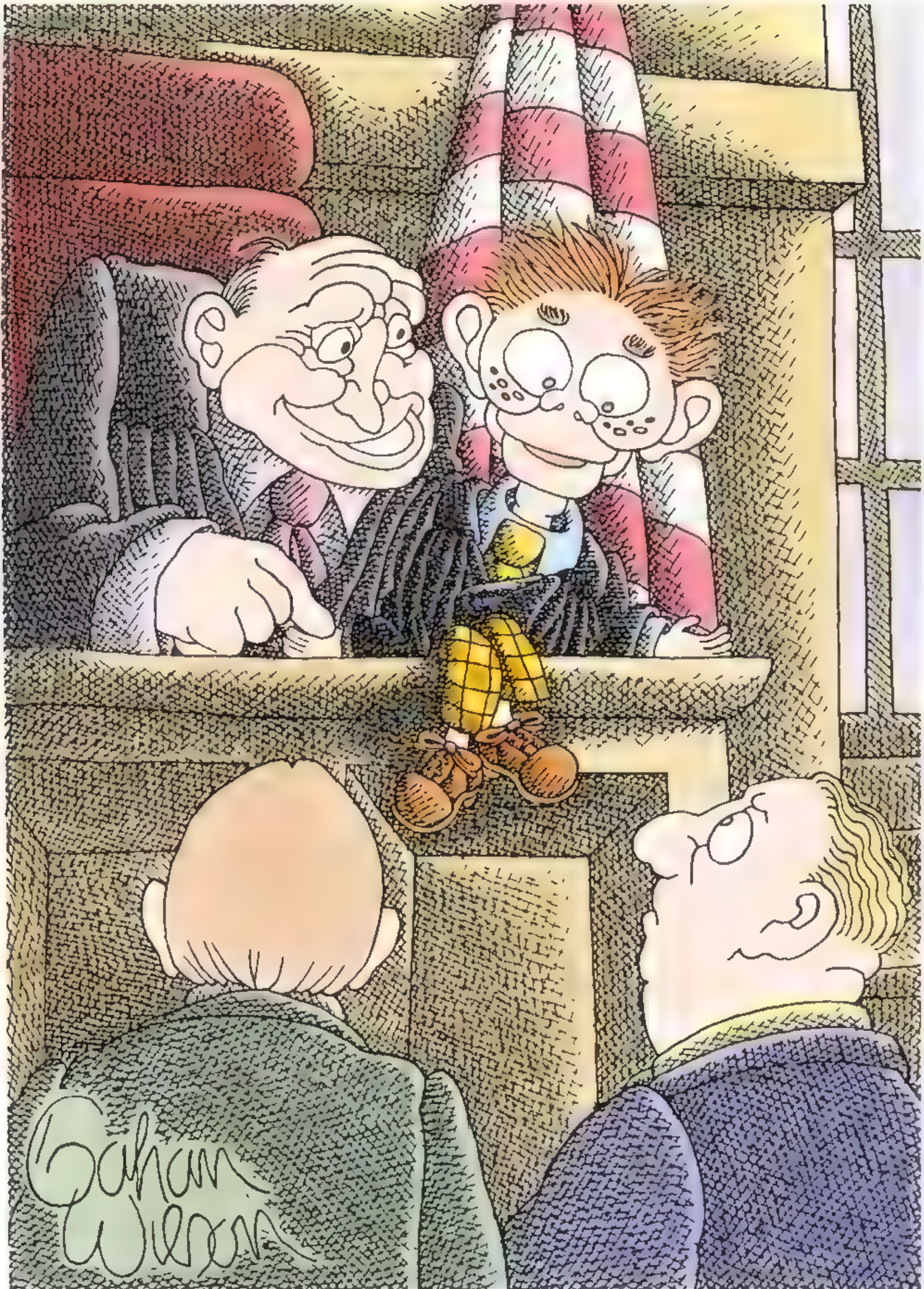
"Maybe, this time, I won't blow it!"



"Here comes your tomato surprise, sir!"



"Imagine this stuff's street value back home on Pluto!"



"So, hey, what do you think, Little Willy—is this guy guilty or not?"



"Honey, I'm home."



"Why is it every time we get together we end up squabbling?"



"Thank God—it's the mother ship!"



"Relax—all I want is a good table."



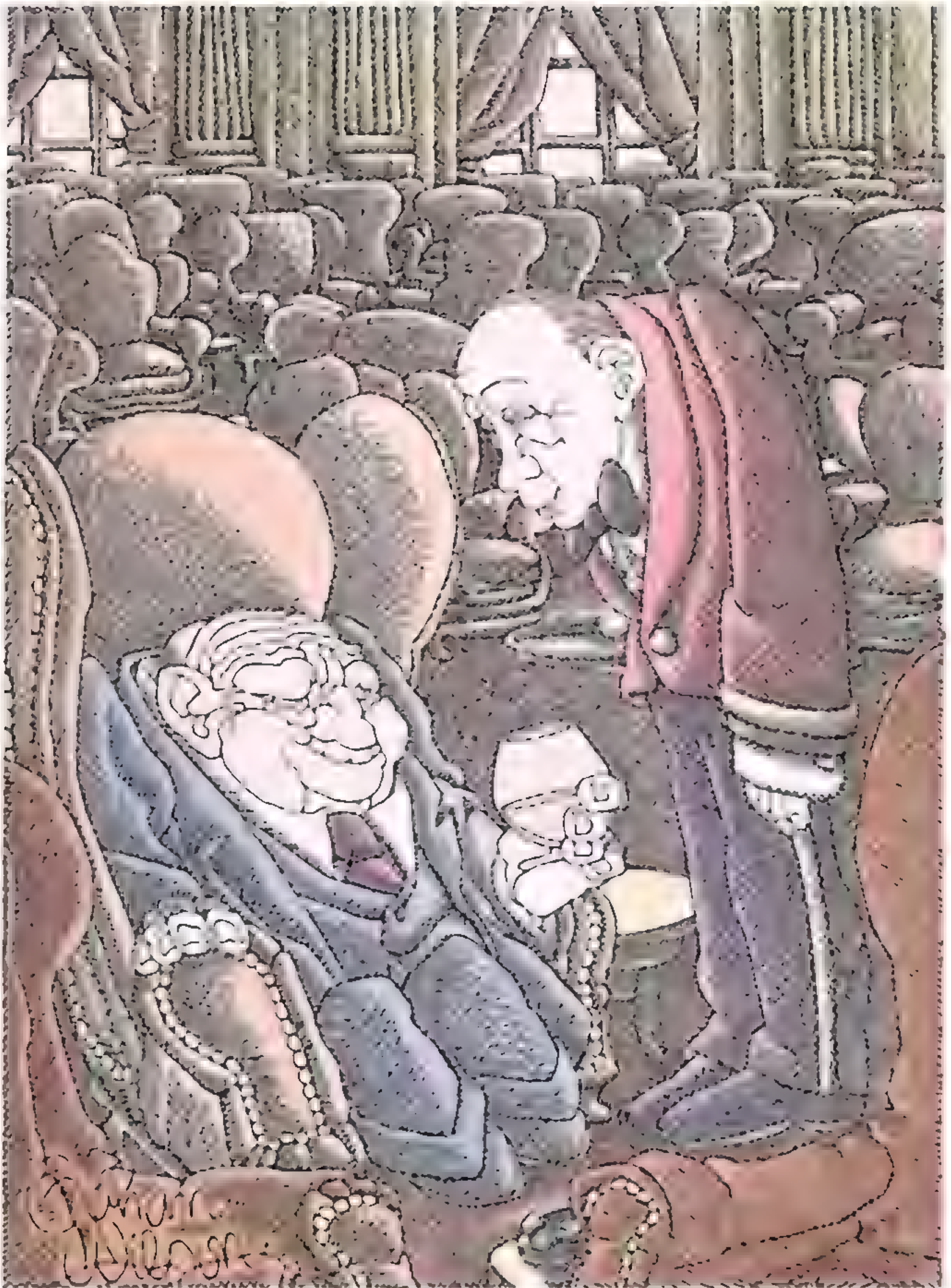
*"In a strange way, General, we may have brought
all this upon ourselves!"*



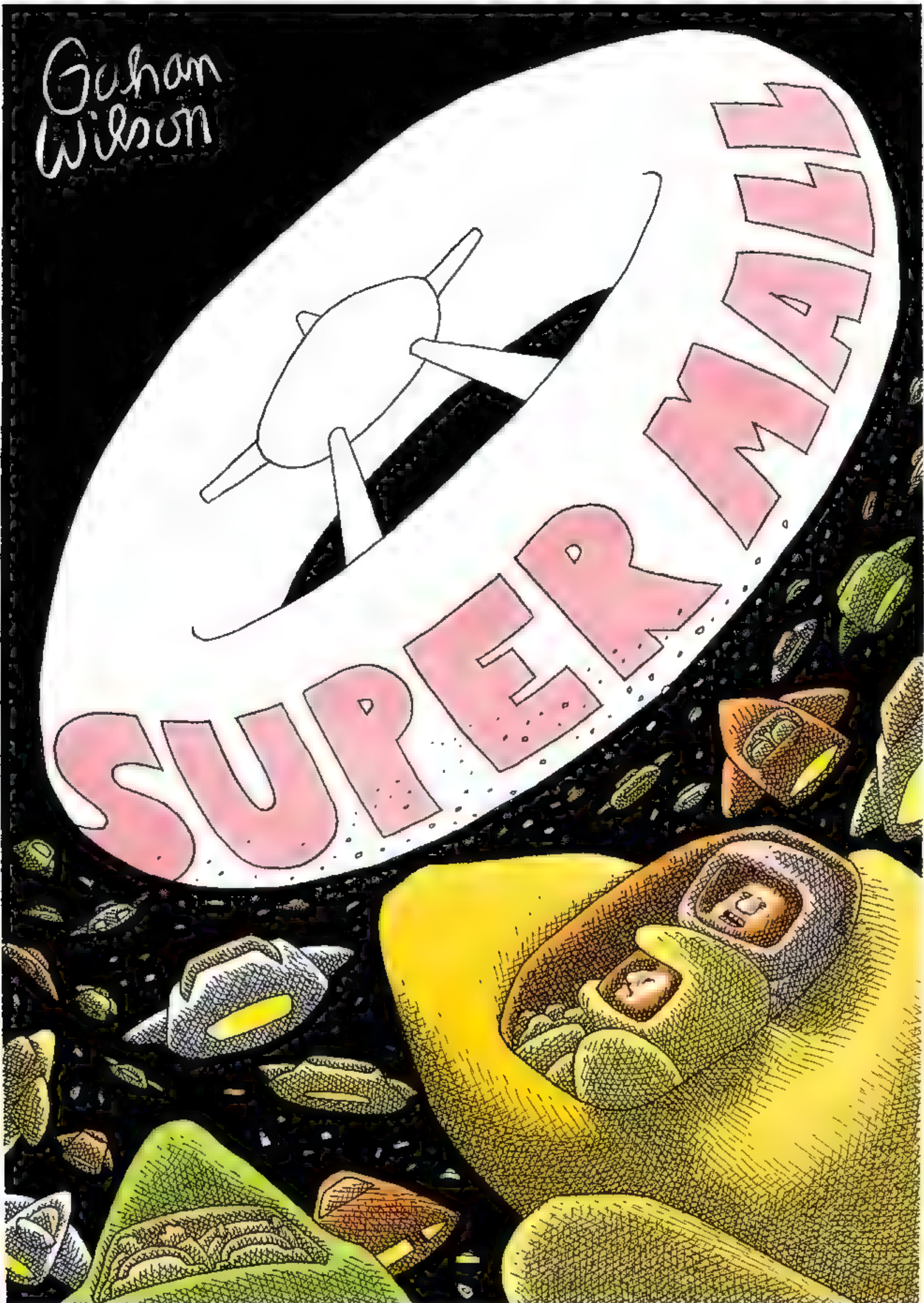
"I just pray to God that none of those poor, dear, innocent children ever see you when you get like this!"



*"But then I think about how rich you are,
and then everything's all right again."*



"Congratulations, sir, you've outlived the lot of them!"



"It's obviously what this whole space thing was about from the first!"



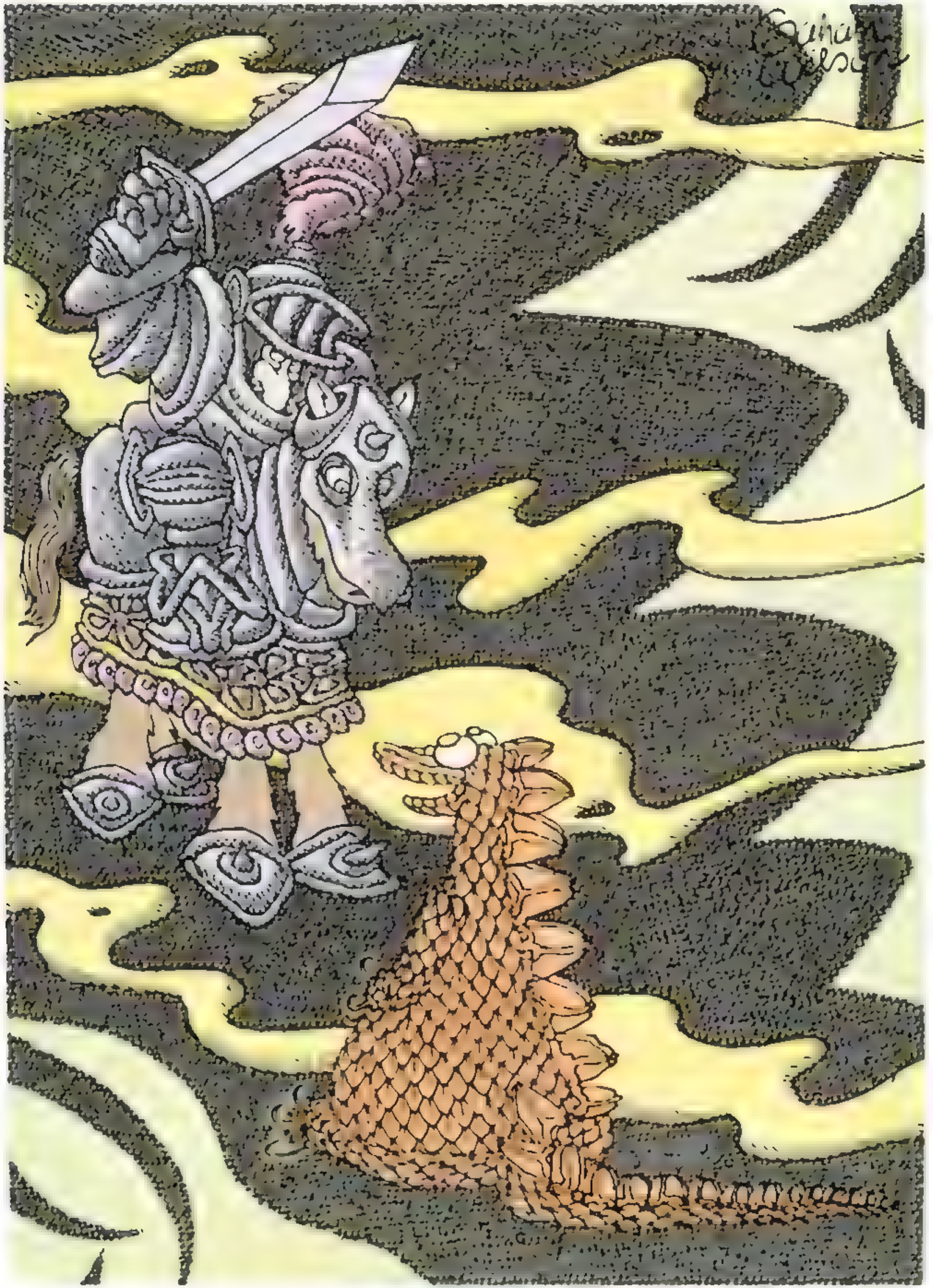
"Well, I think it takes a lot away from the Old World charm!"



"Harry always said genetic engineering would be a big mistake!"



"You really like this place, don't you, Harry?"



"Here's Mommy now!"



"There will be an enormous fly in your future!"



"If he has any talent whatsoever, I'll be rich!"



"Again, I must remind the witness that he is under oath!"



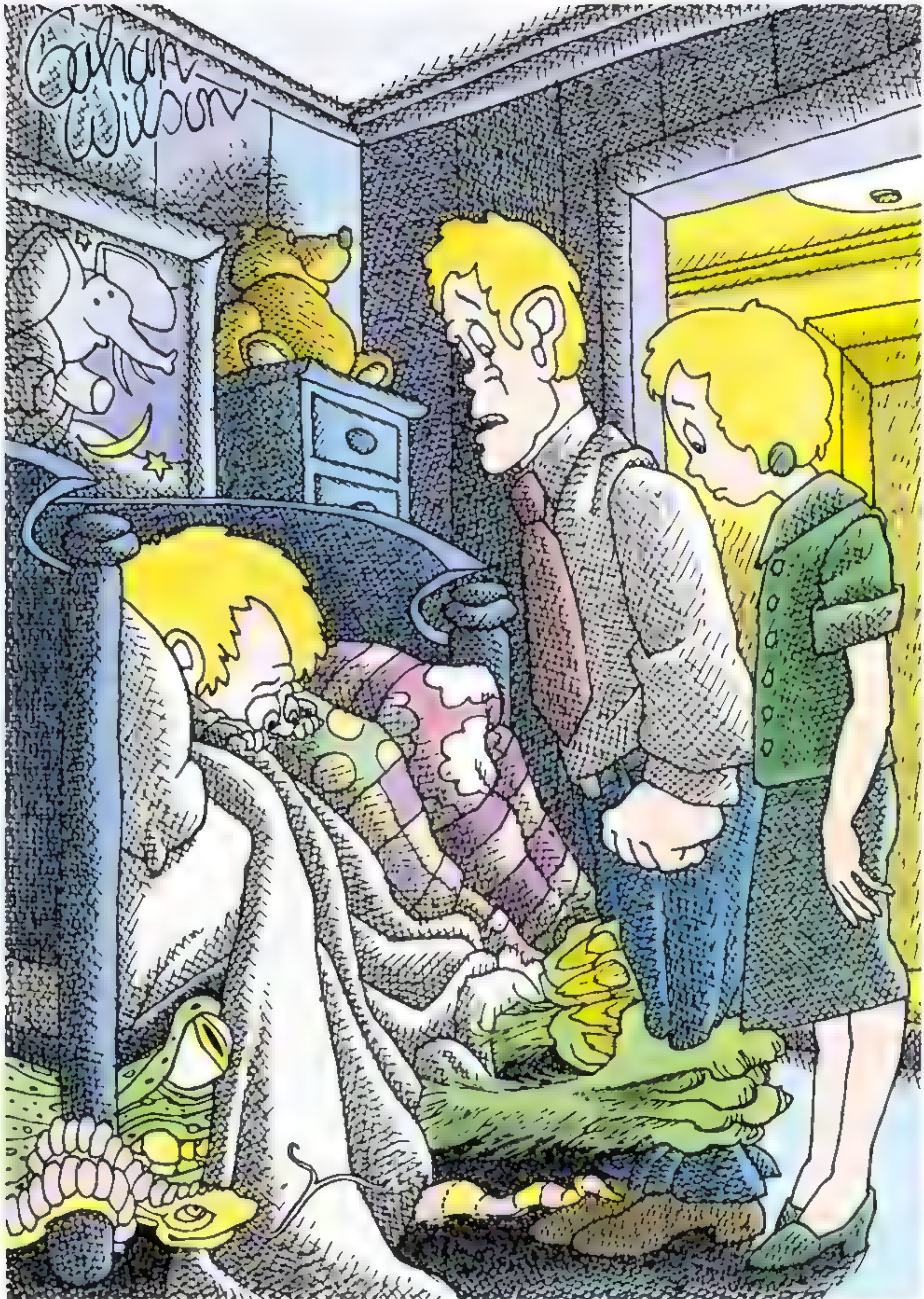
*"He's been upset since they colorized 'It's a Wonderful Life,'
and I think it's finally pushed Him over the edge!"*



*"It's a damn shame we can't get away with this
more than one night a year!"*



"Here's his left foot."



"He's right—there is something under the bed!"



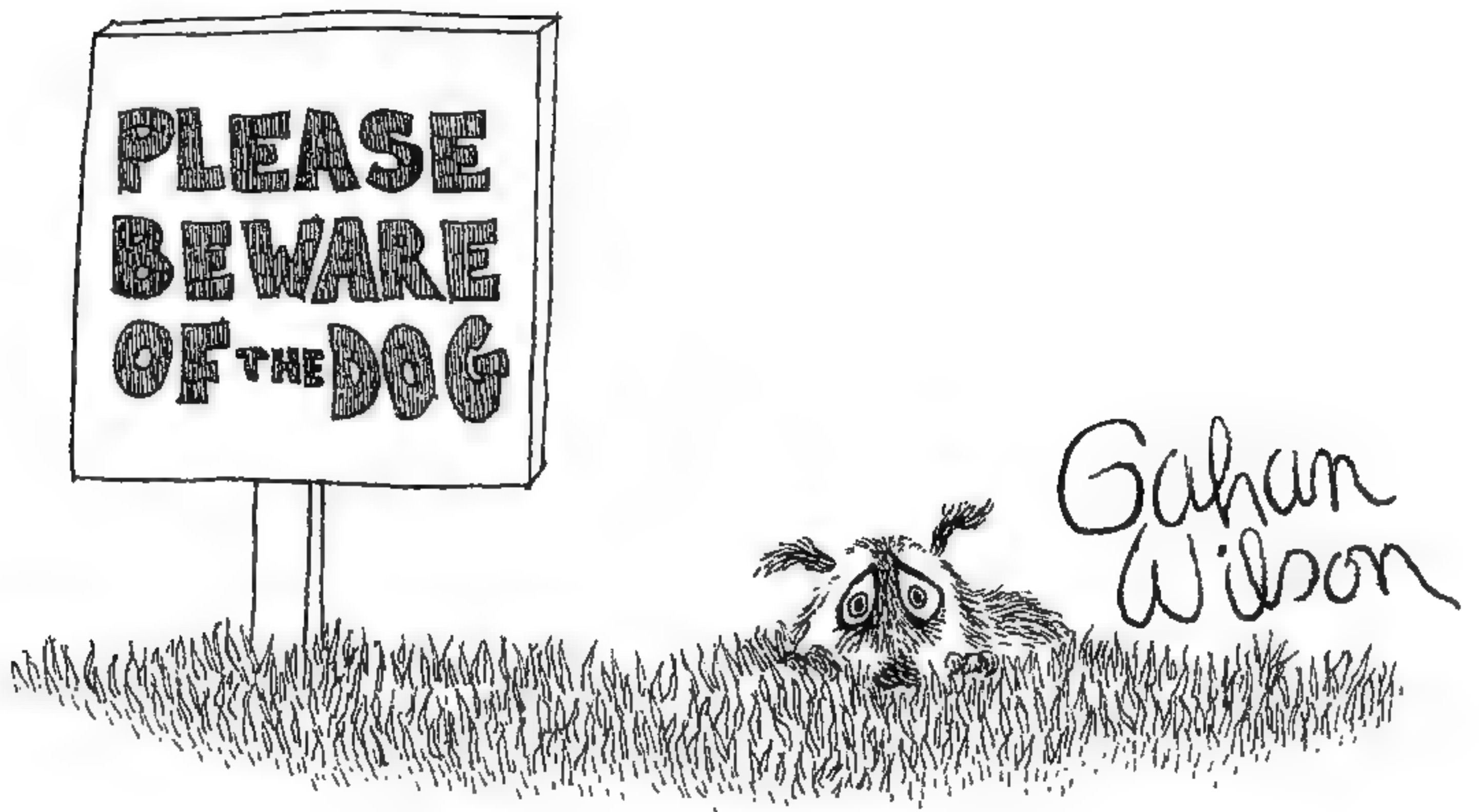
*"I suppose it was just a matter of time before they
roofed the whole thing over."*

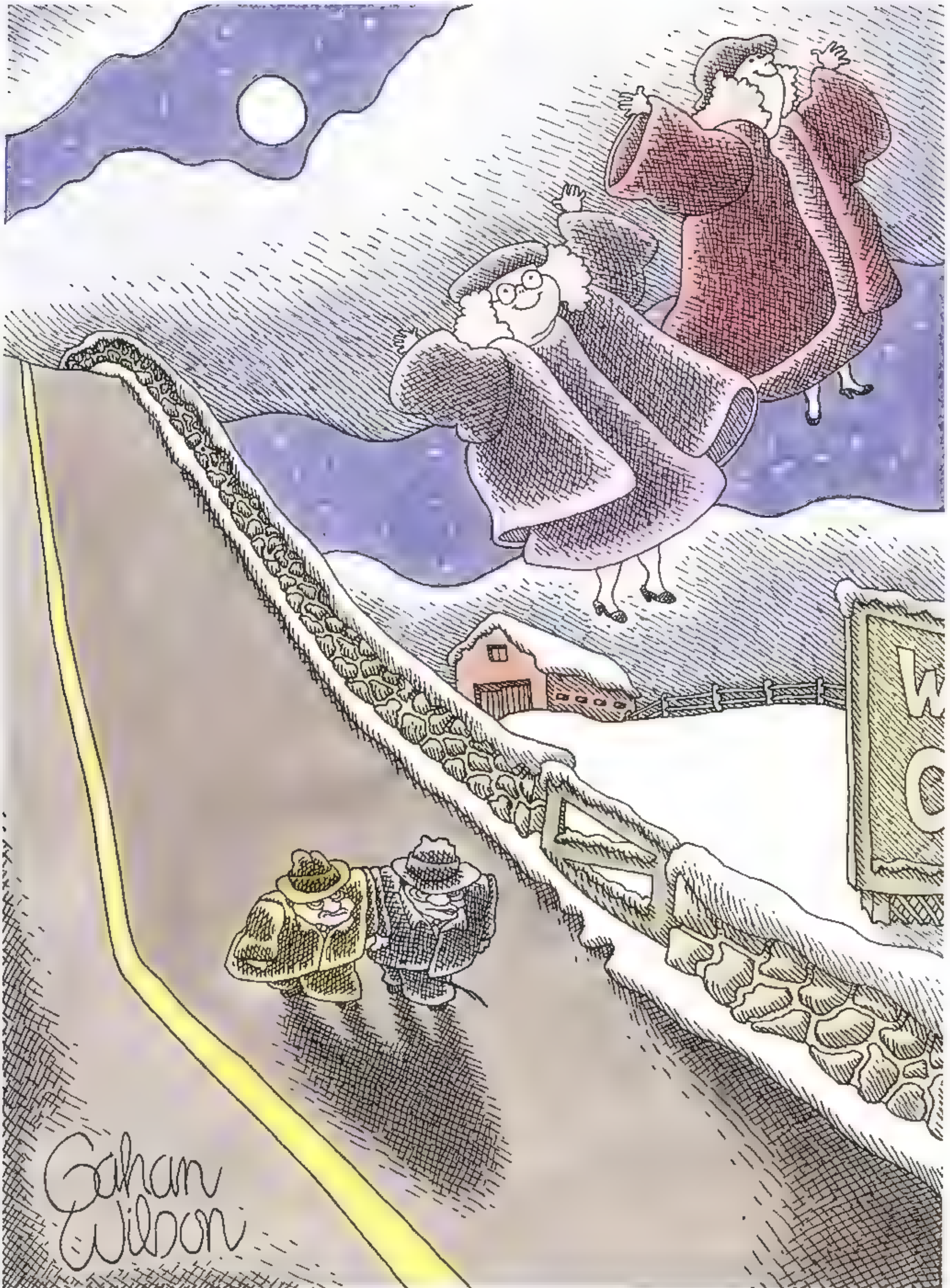


*"I'm sorry, I can't talk to you now, but please leave your
name and number after the sound of the tone and I'll call
you back a little after tea-time!"*



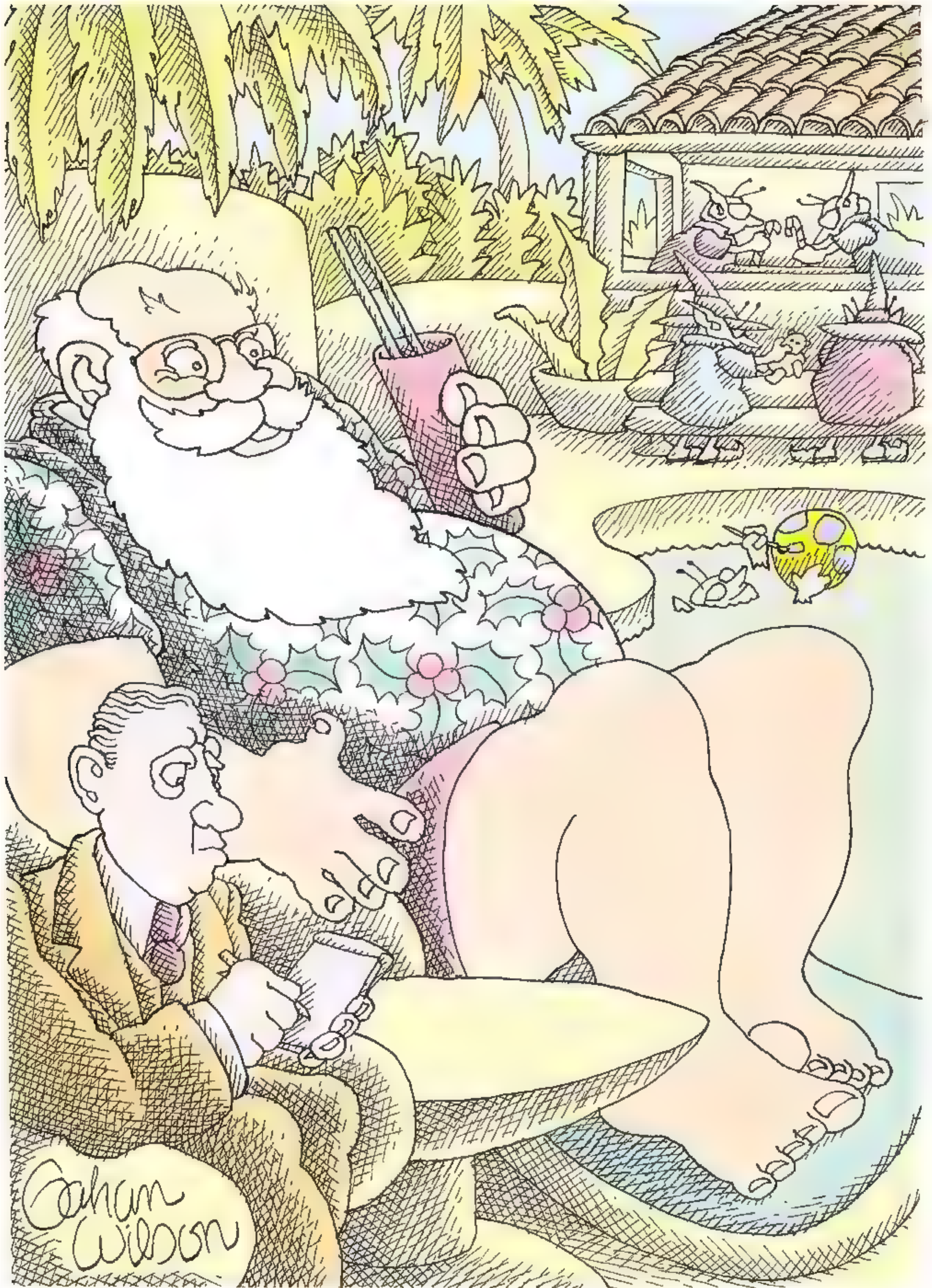
*"Not only do I curse you but your descendants also.
Know that they will be so heavily taxed they'll be
forced to open this castle as a tourist attraction!"*



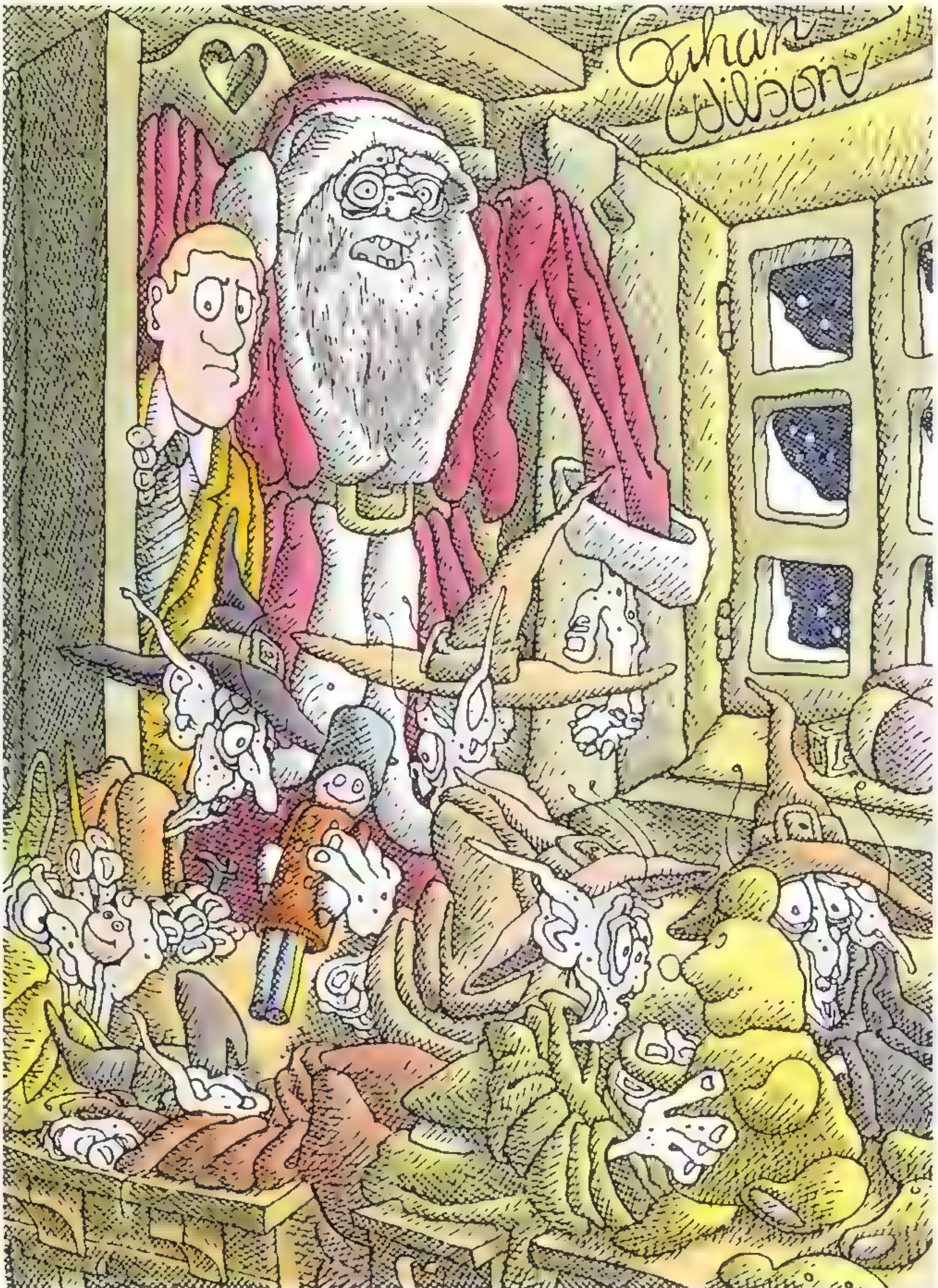


Graham
Wilson

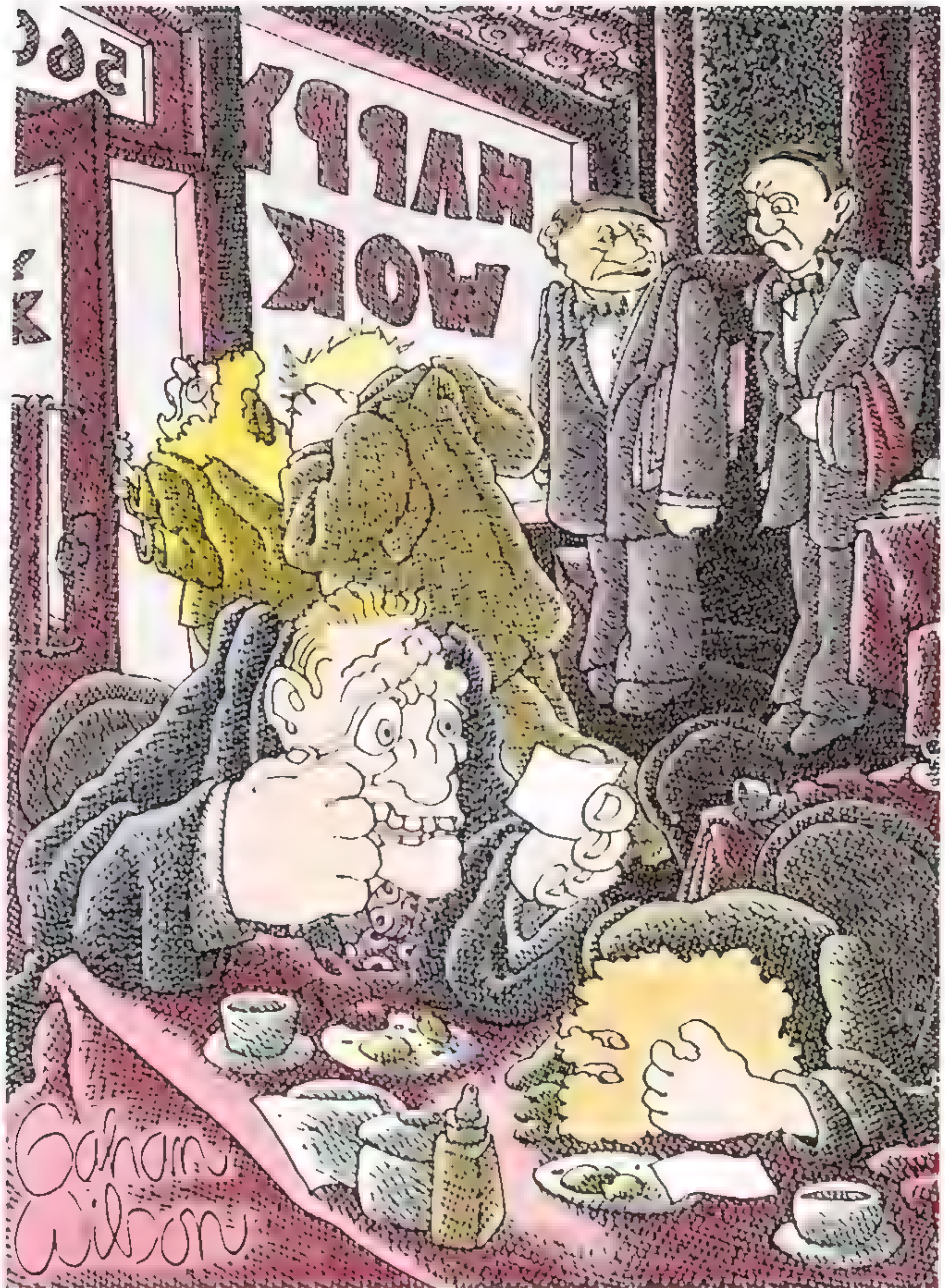
"Women!"



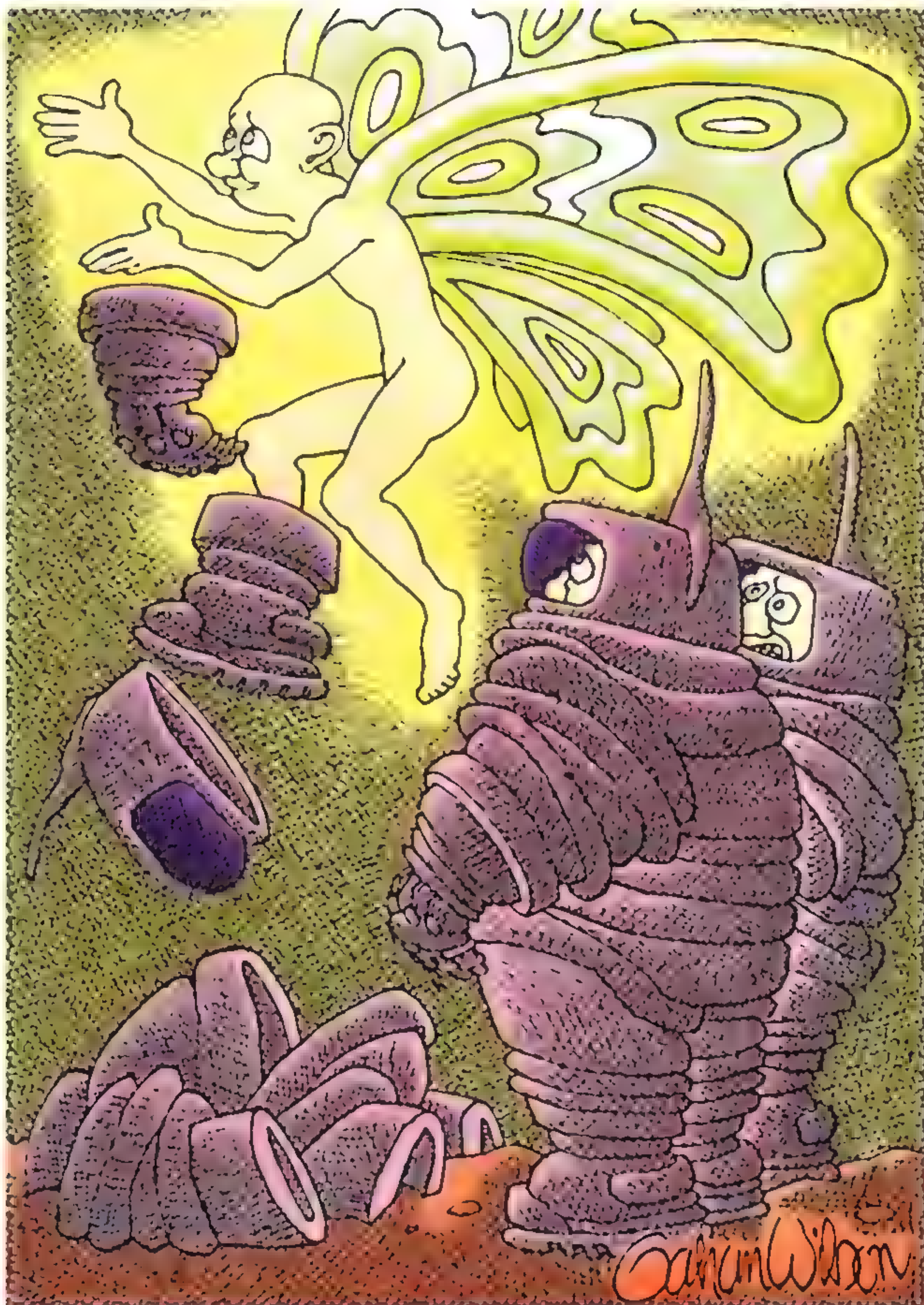
"We've never regretted relocating to California!"



*"The place hasn't been the same since that
hole in the ozone opened up!"*



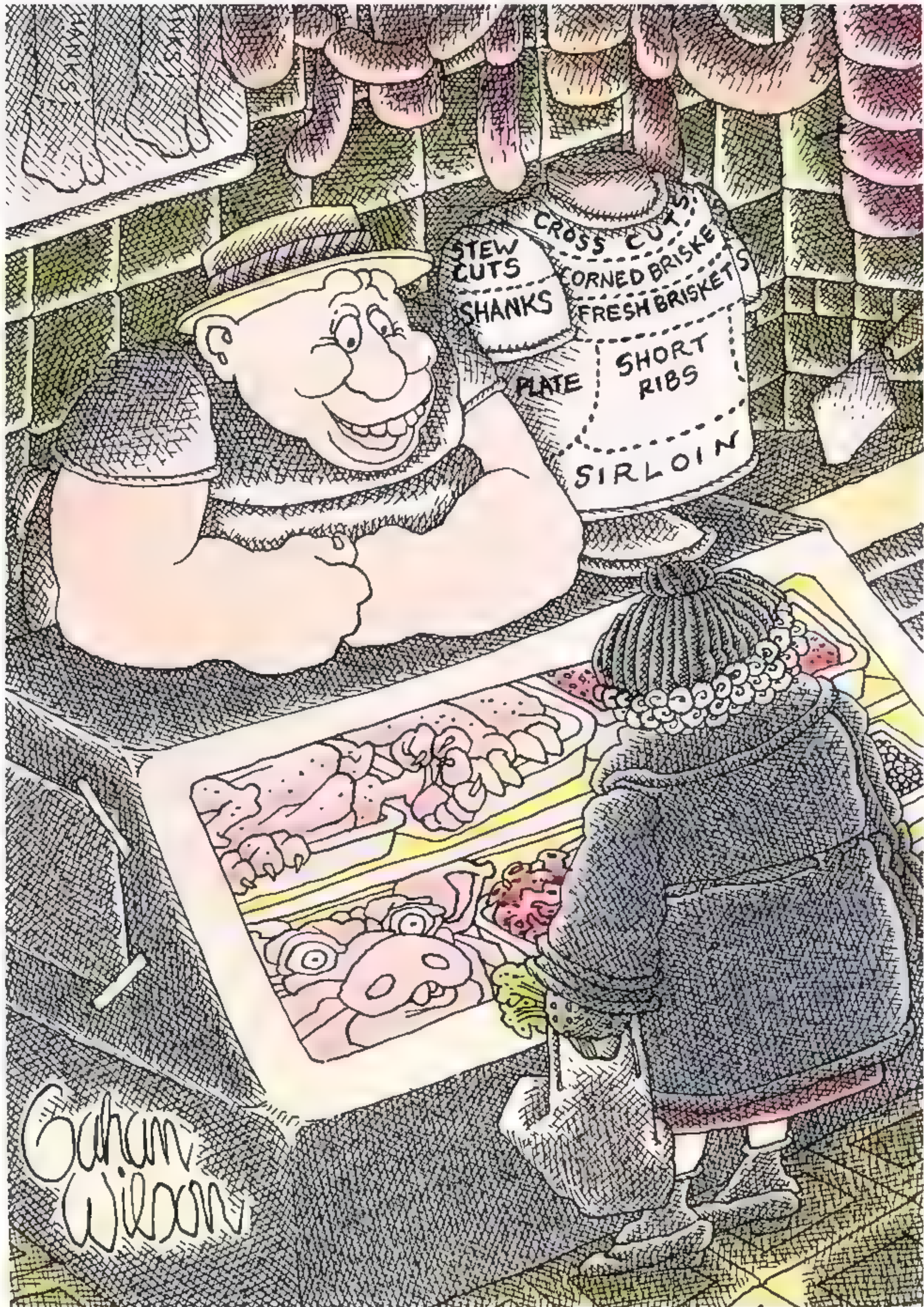
"We've got to lighten up those fortune cookies!"



"I must say this planet is having an odd effect on our astronauts."



"My goodness, Mr. Barret, with all those vitamins and all that jogging, we thought you'd never show up!"



"It's a novelty t-shirt me and the boys designed, Mrs. Patterson!"



"You never know what will catch on!"



"They're secret service. They appeared the day Billy decided he wanted to be president when he grew up."



*"It wasn't easy in New York, but here I've got them
where I want them!"*



"All right, so it didn't work out so well in Hollywood—you're still the best damn cop on the force!"



*"Very few people are aware that the 'New York Times'
Sunday crossword puzzle is contagious."*

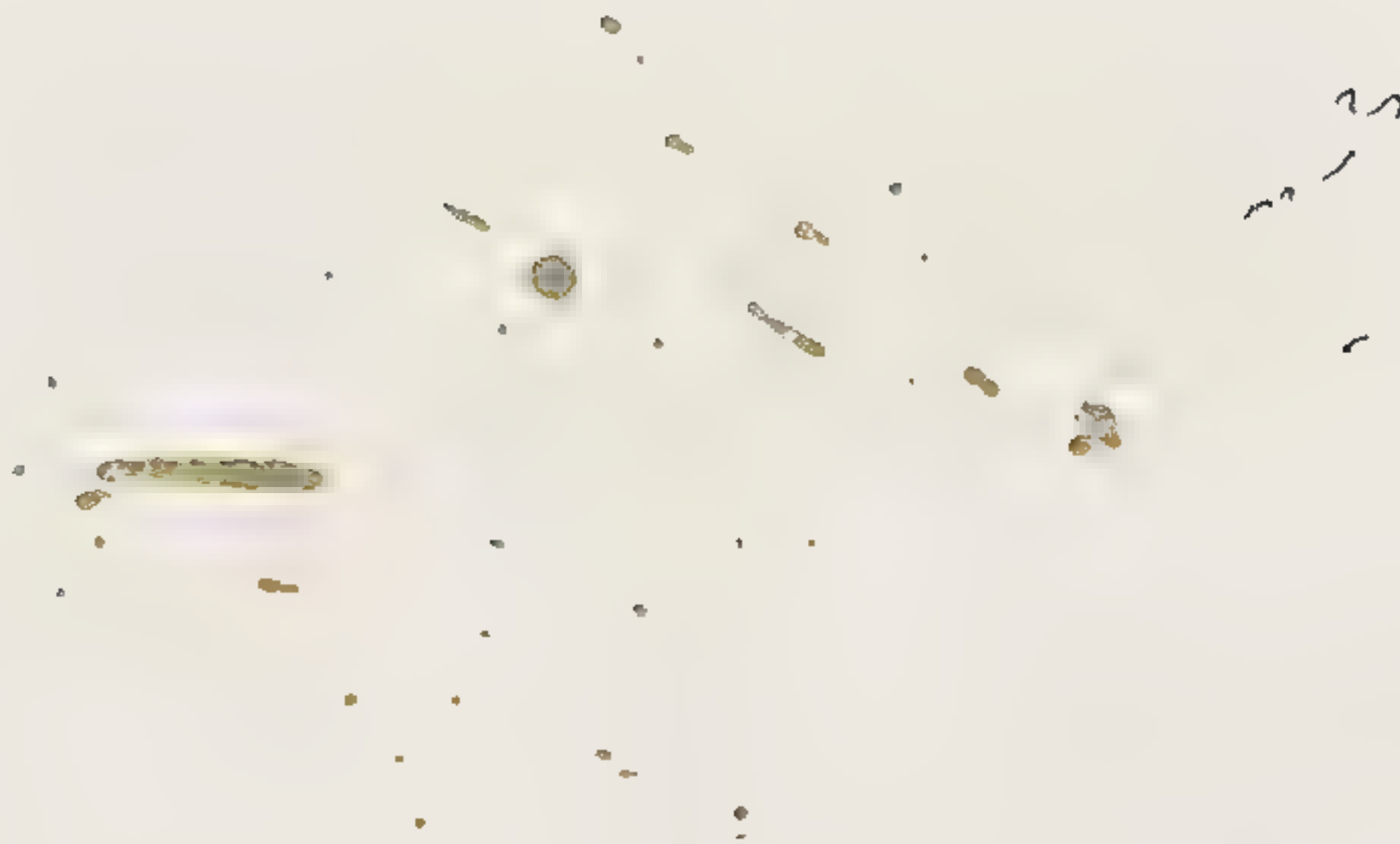


Gabriel
Winters

"Don't try to tell me you regret so much as promised
that I might be running this corporation."

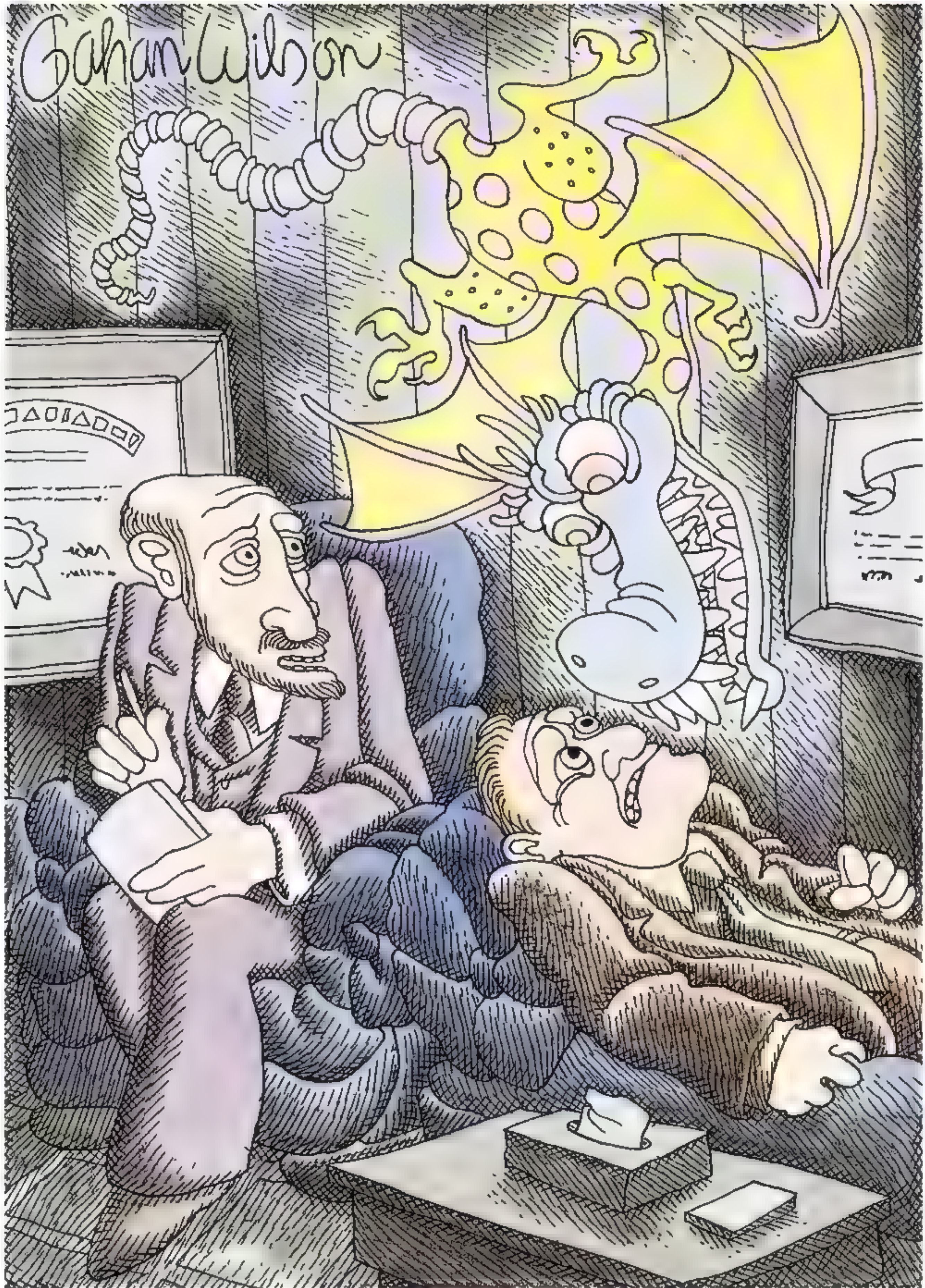


*"How about resolving that, starting next year,
you won't be such a total jerk?"*



"I DON'T LIKE THE
LOOKS OF THIS!"





*"First, let me put your mind at ease about
that being an hallucination...."*

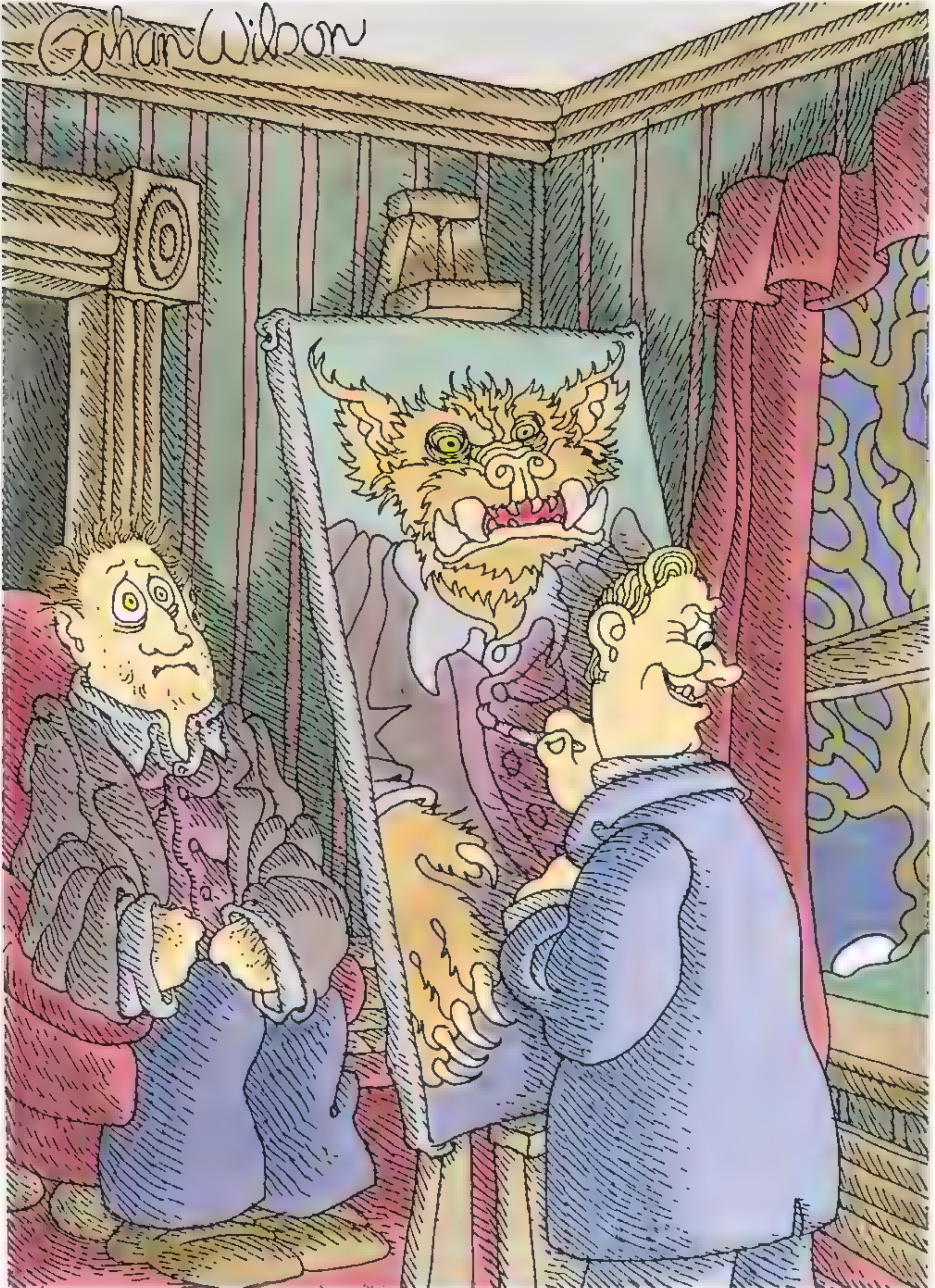


"Maybe if you tip them they'll go away!"



"Don't let it get away!"

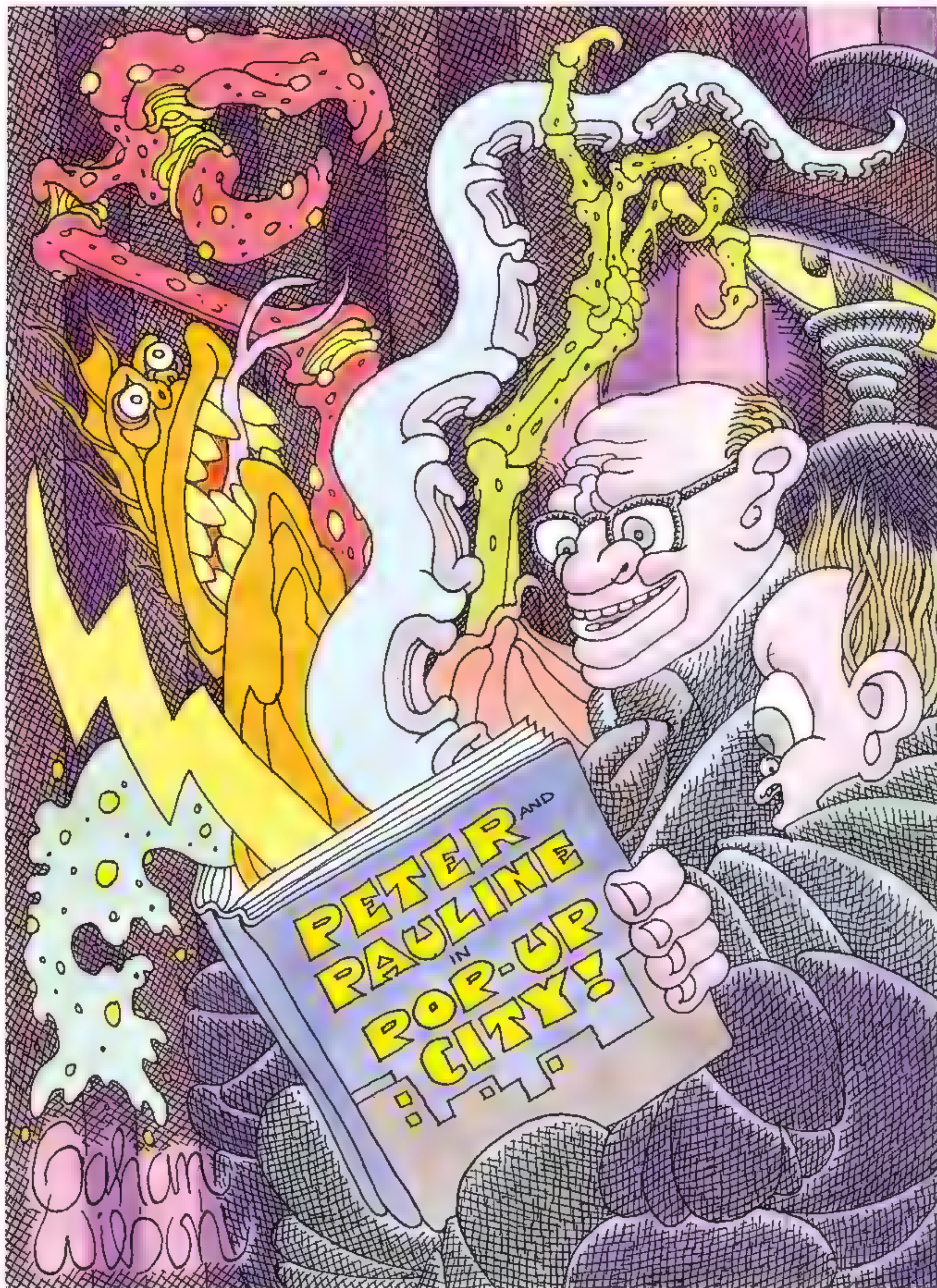
Graham Wilson



"Here it comes!"



"There it is—the home of the 'National Enquirer'!"



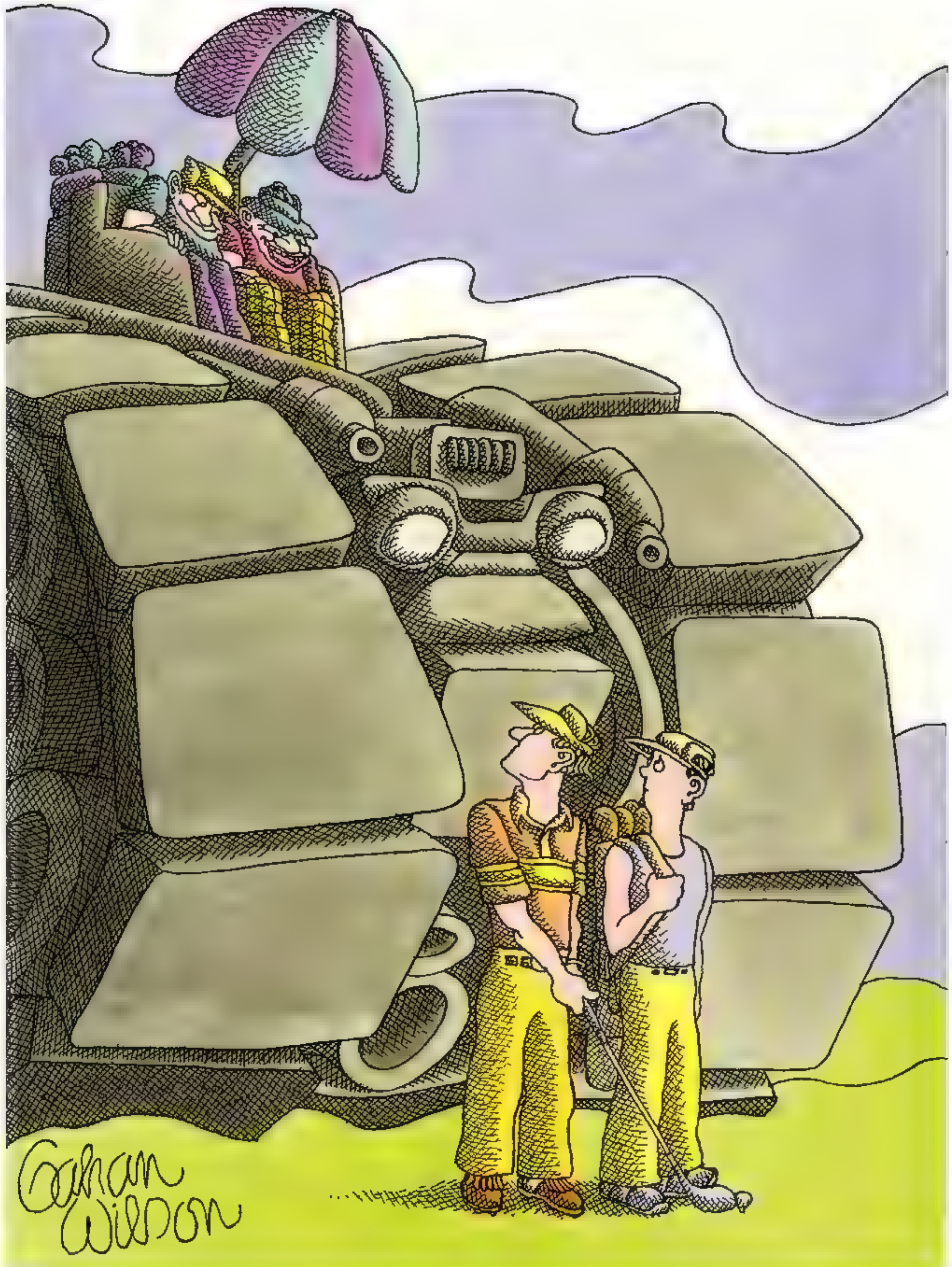
"Well, sir, it looks like things are getting pretty serious for Peter and Pauline."



"I don't know what we'd have done if he hadn't shown up!"



"This is a terrible table!"



"Mind if we play through?"



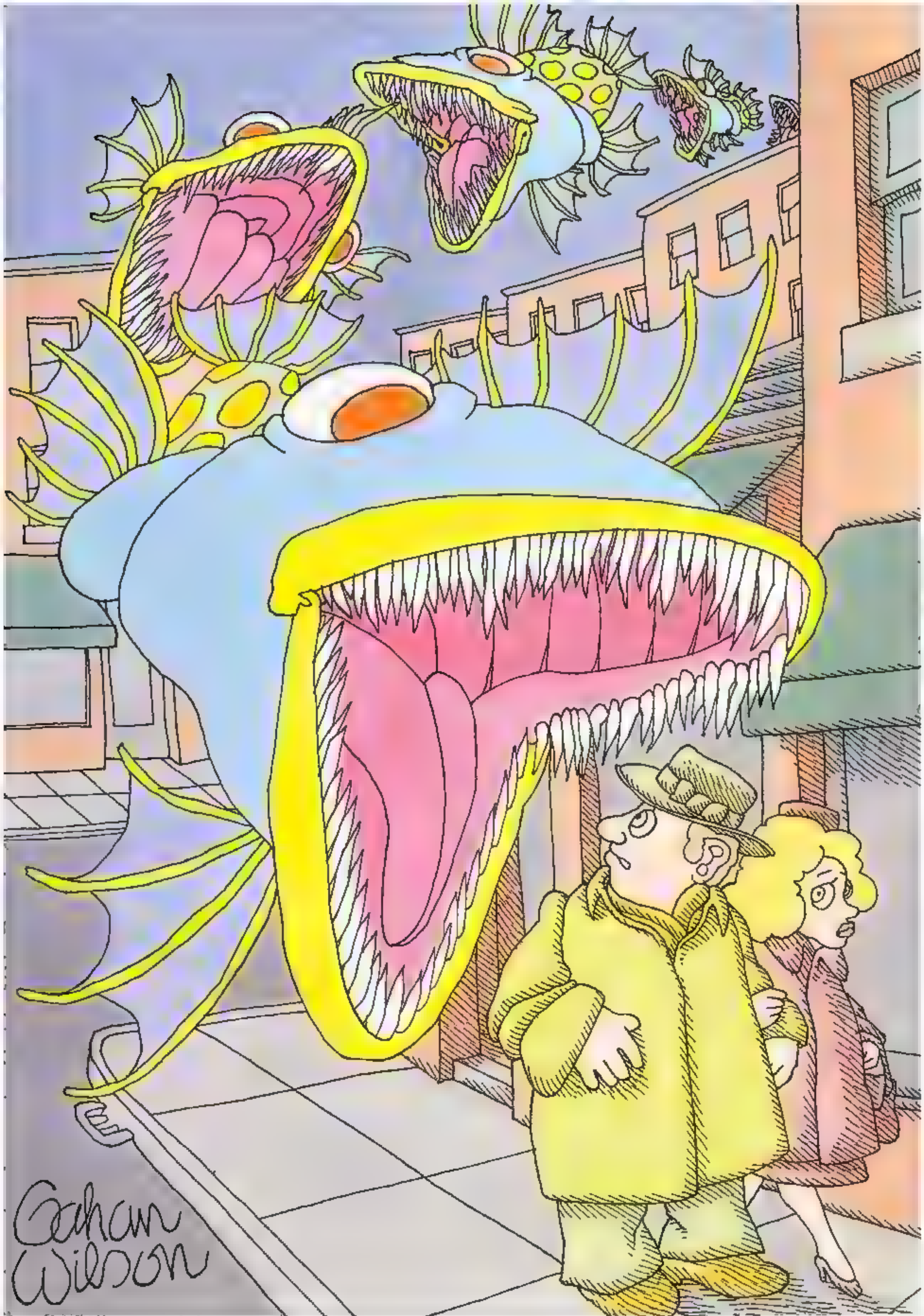
*"I'm so very pleased you're all coming around
to my point of view."*



"He just loves his cute little postmortem doll!"



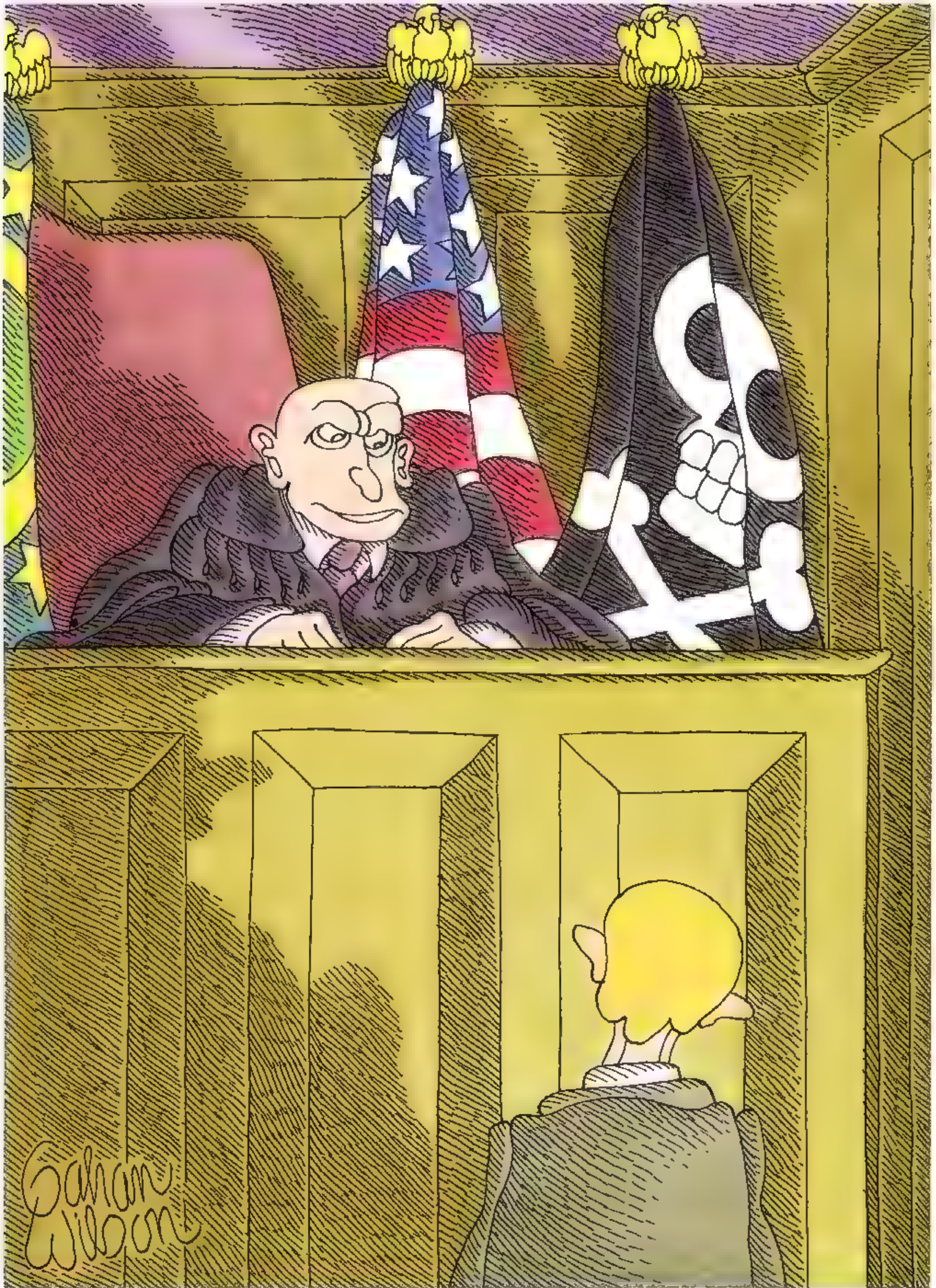
"Happy New Year!"



"I don't like the looks of this!"



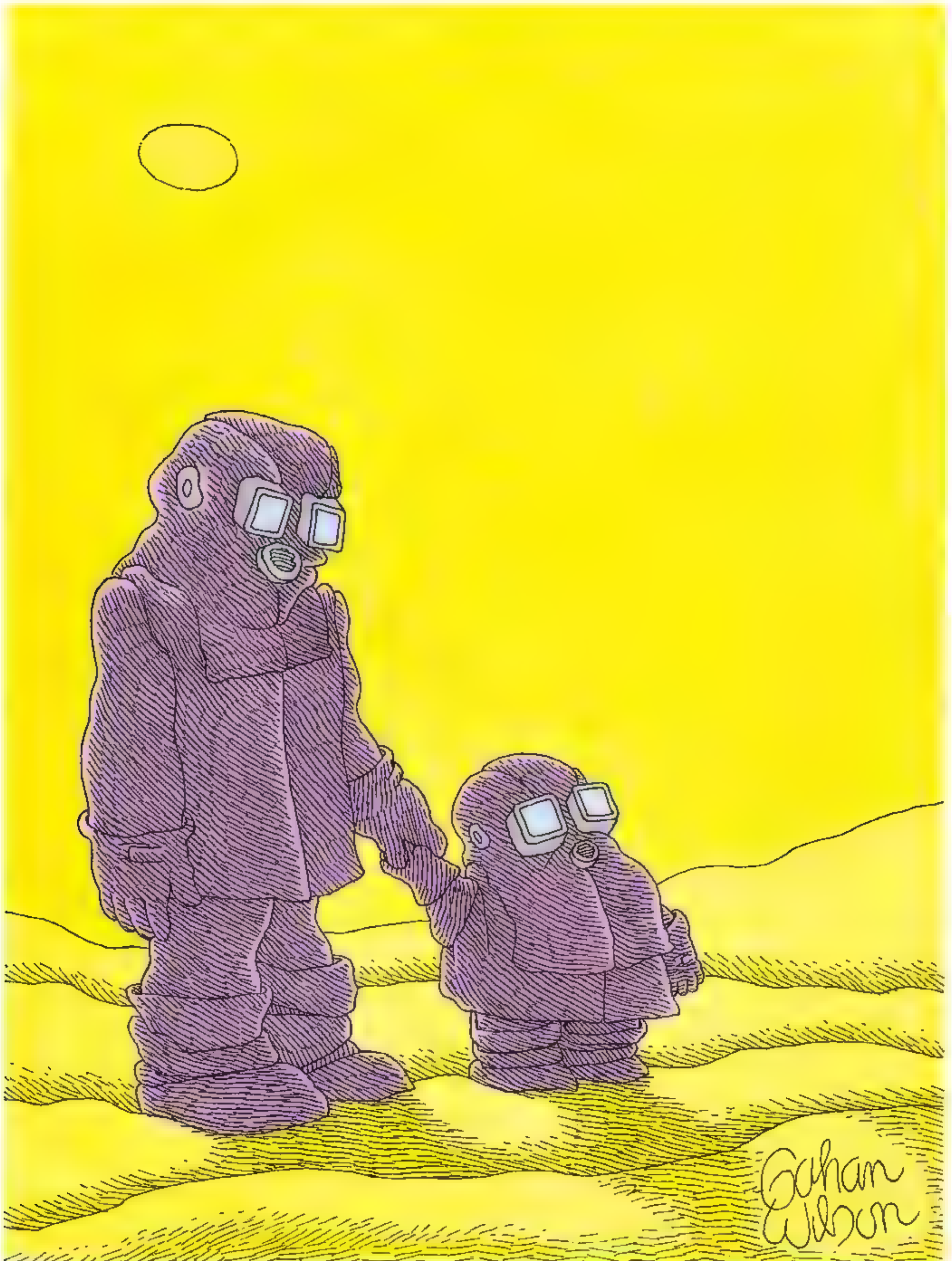
"Then, after you have spent those 30 years working your heart out on the company's production line, you will be laid off because of a corporate merger, only to discover you have lost all your retirement benefits."



"The one to the far right happens to be my own personal flag."



"Watch out for the fourth step."



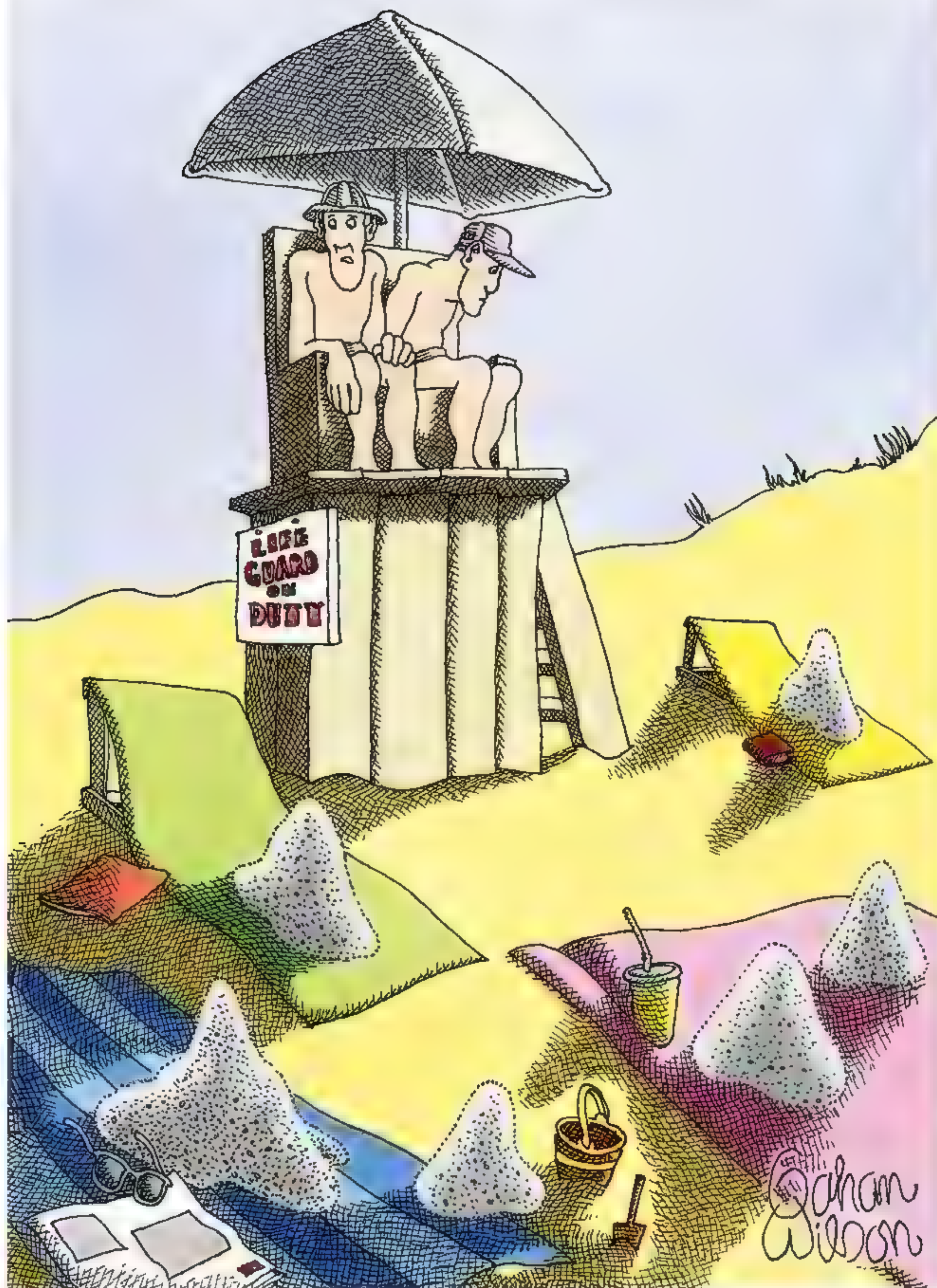
"The sky looks blue because your protective lenses are tinted, dear."



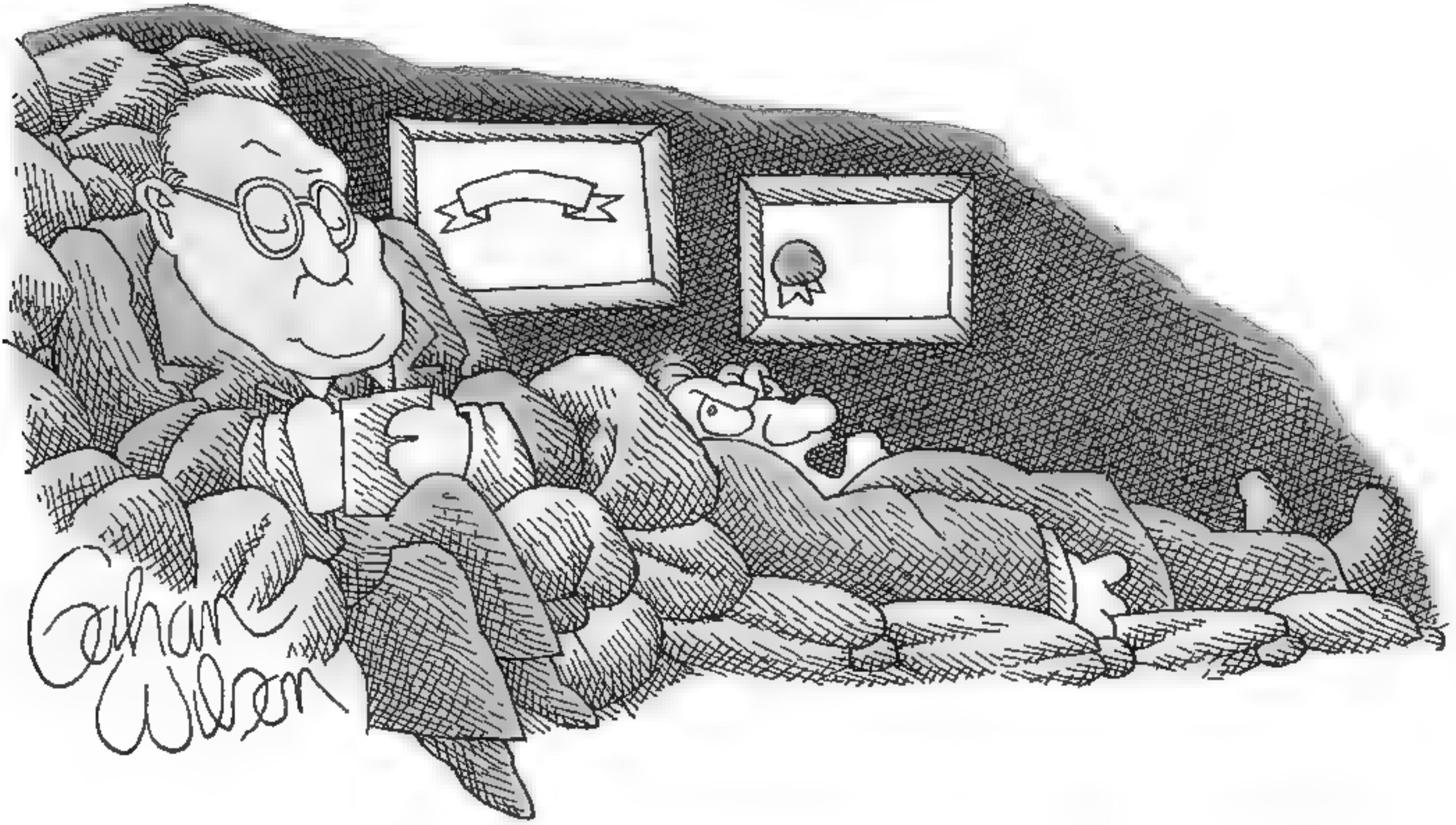
"Gee, I can even remember back to when you could eat them."

Graham
Weldon

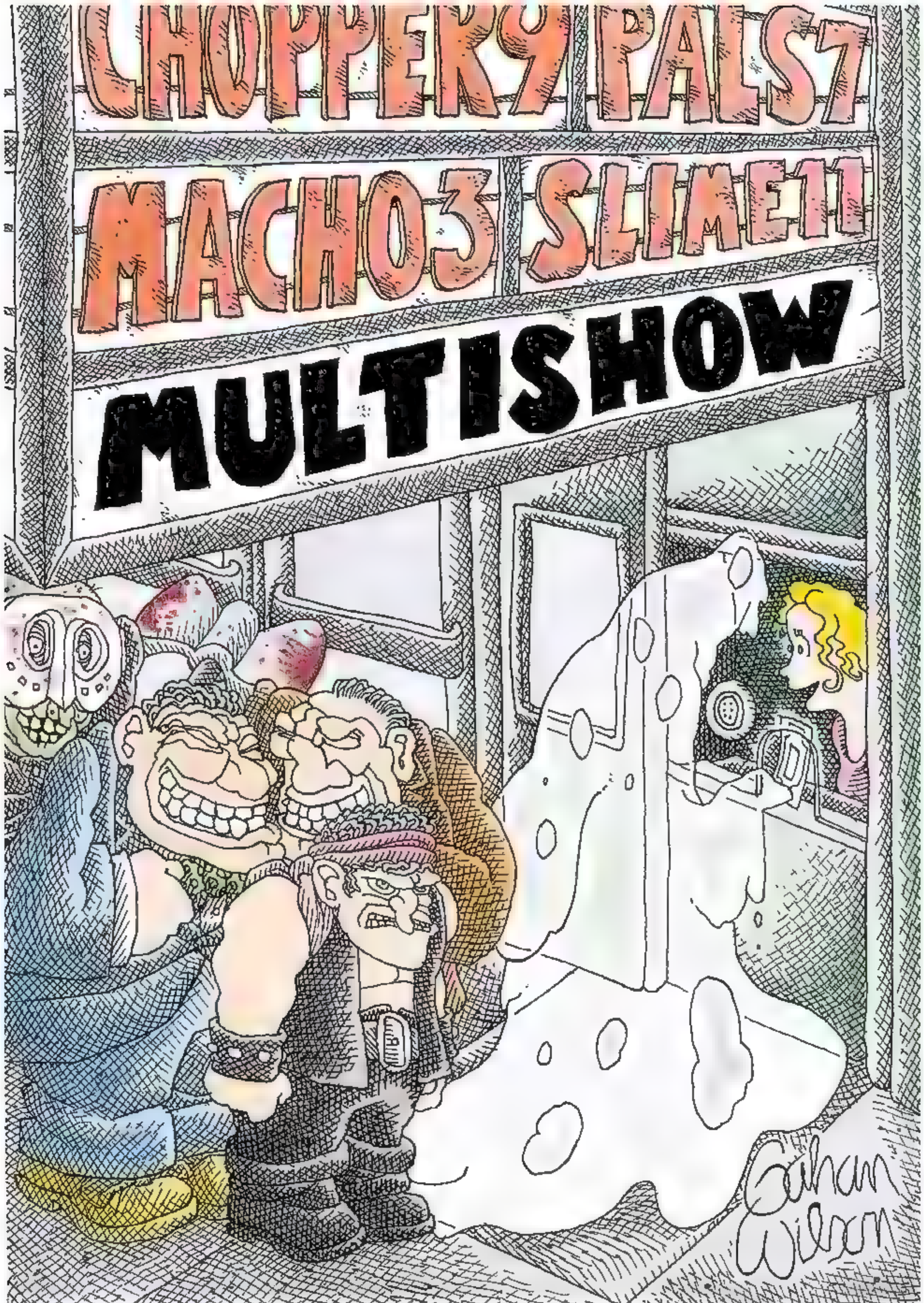
"Now that's what I call a sand trap."



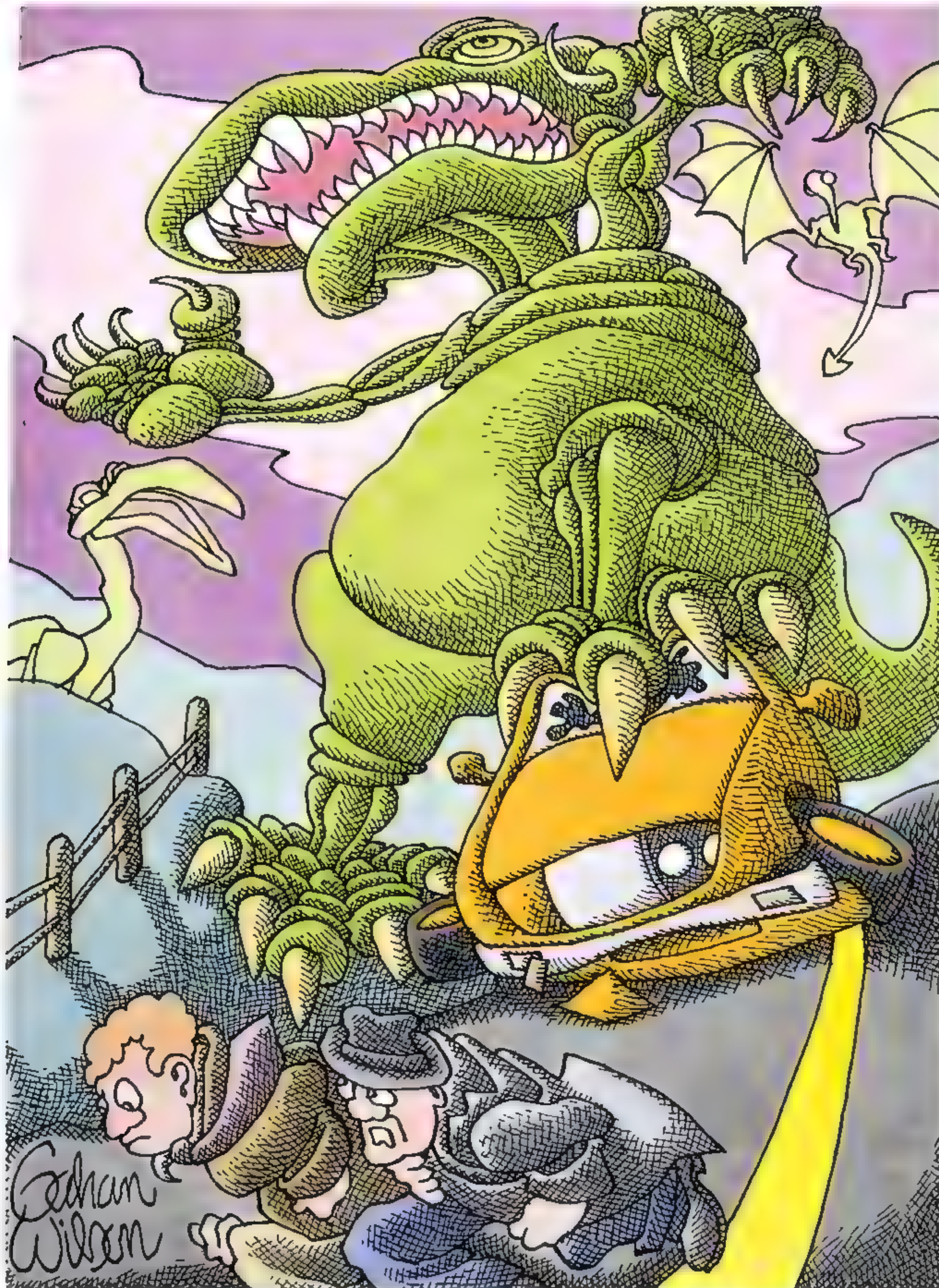
"I keep telling them to use sunblock."



"You're not even slowing me down."



"You're Slime, right?"



*"Anyhow, the article in the 'Times' says they were only hibernating
and the greenhouse effect has brought them out."*



"Buy it and I'll get it off you."



"I think we're losing 'em."




"Hi! I'm the Ghost of April Fool's Day Past!"



Gahan Wilson

FIFTY YEARS *of* PLAYBOY CARTOONS





Gahan
Wilson

FIFTY YEARS *of* PLAYBOY CARTOONS



WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY G. TRU





TABLE of CONTENTS

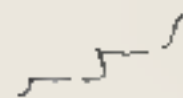
第一章 緒論	1	第二章 緒論	1
第二章 緒論	2	第三章 緒論	2
第三章 緒論	3	第四章 緒論	3
第四章 緒論	4	第五章 緒論	4
第五章 緒論	5	第六章 緒論	5

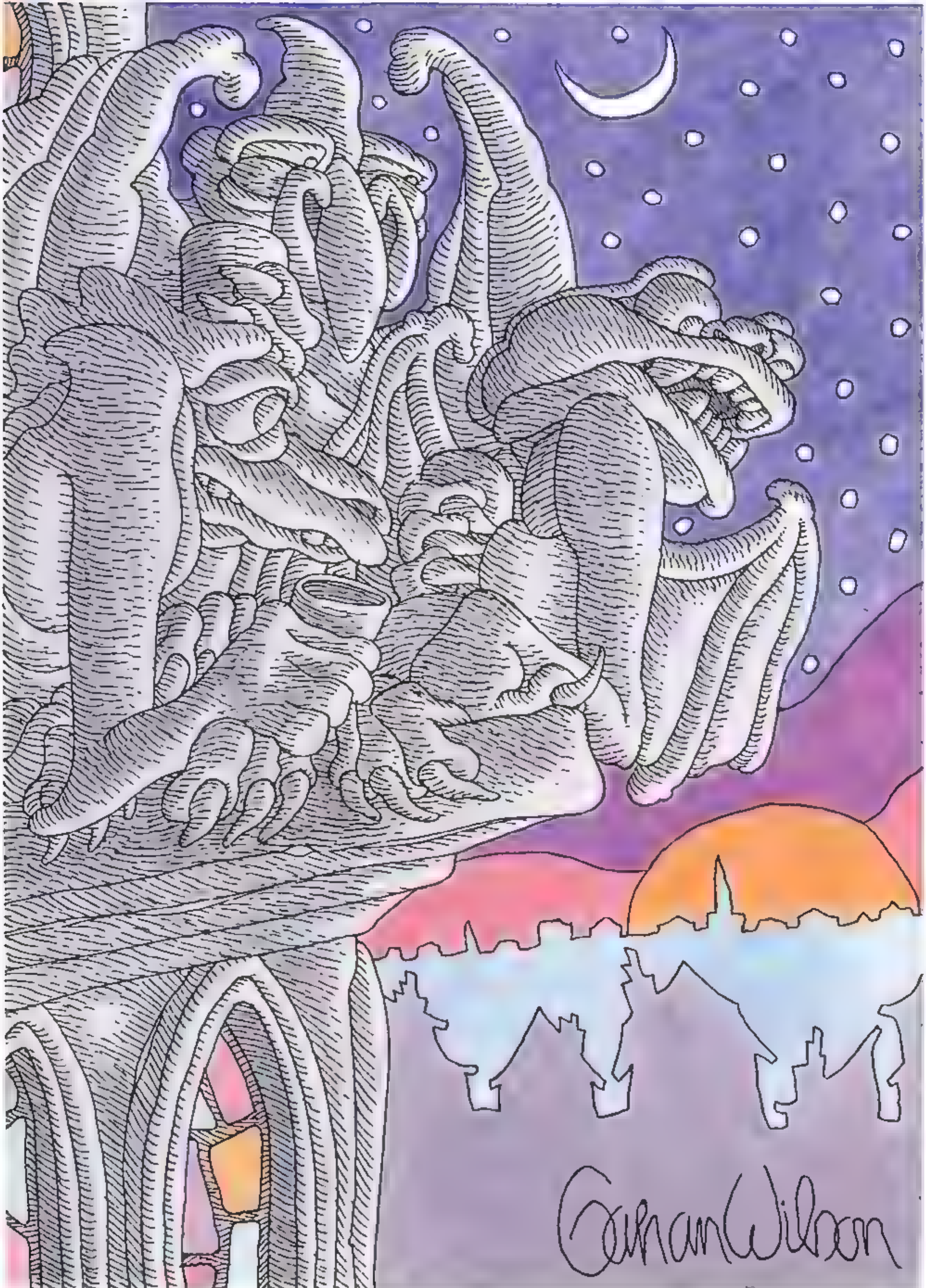






"I'VE HAD JUST
ABOUT AS MUCH
OF THIS AS I'M
GOING TO TAKE!"

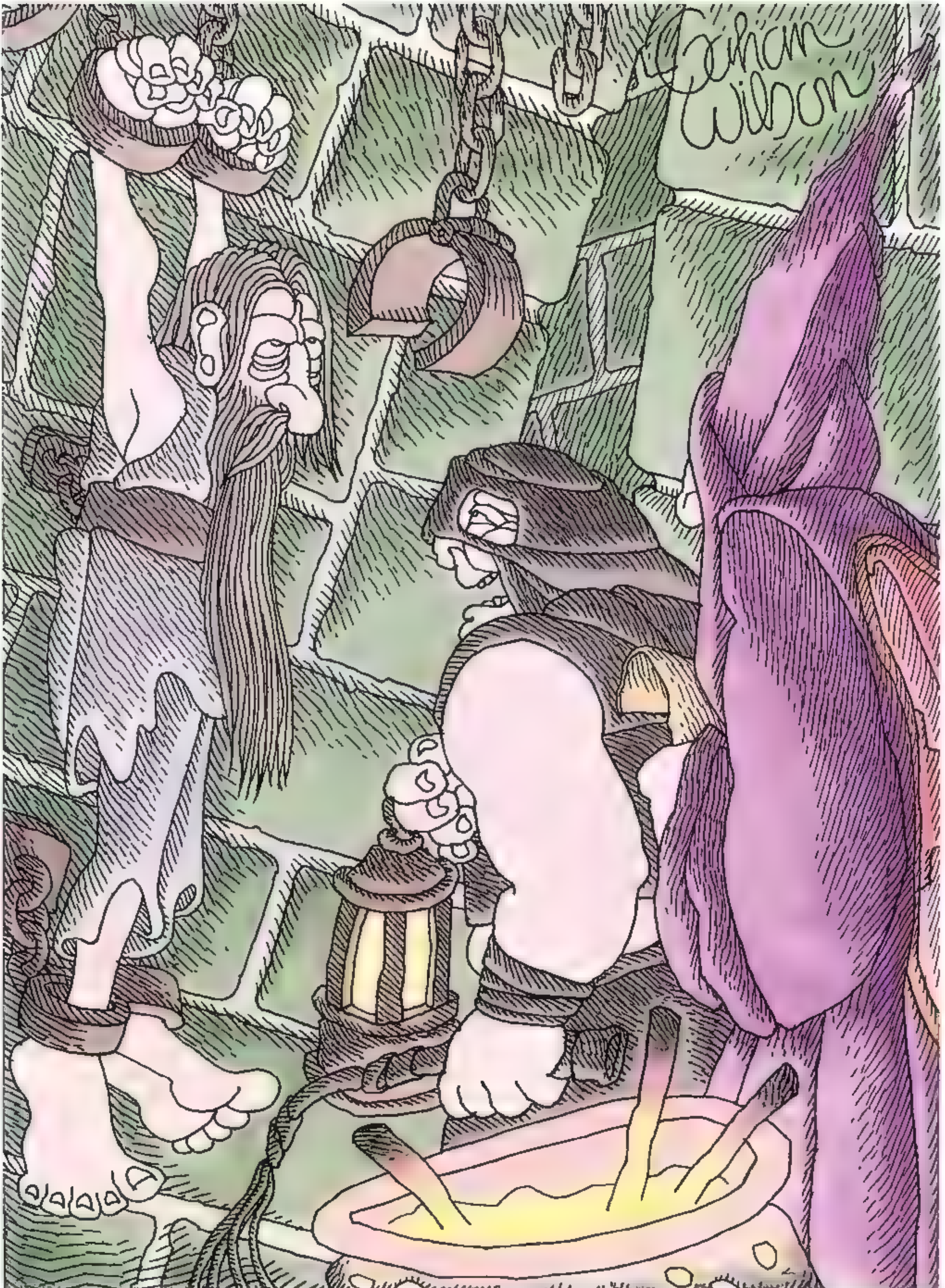




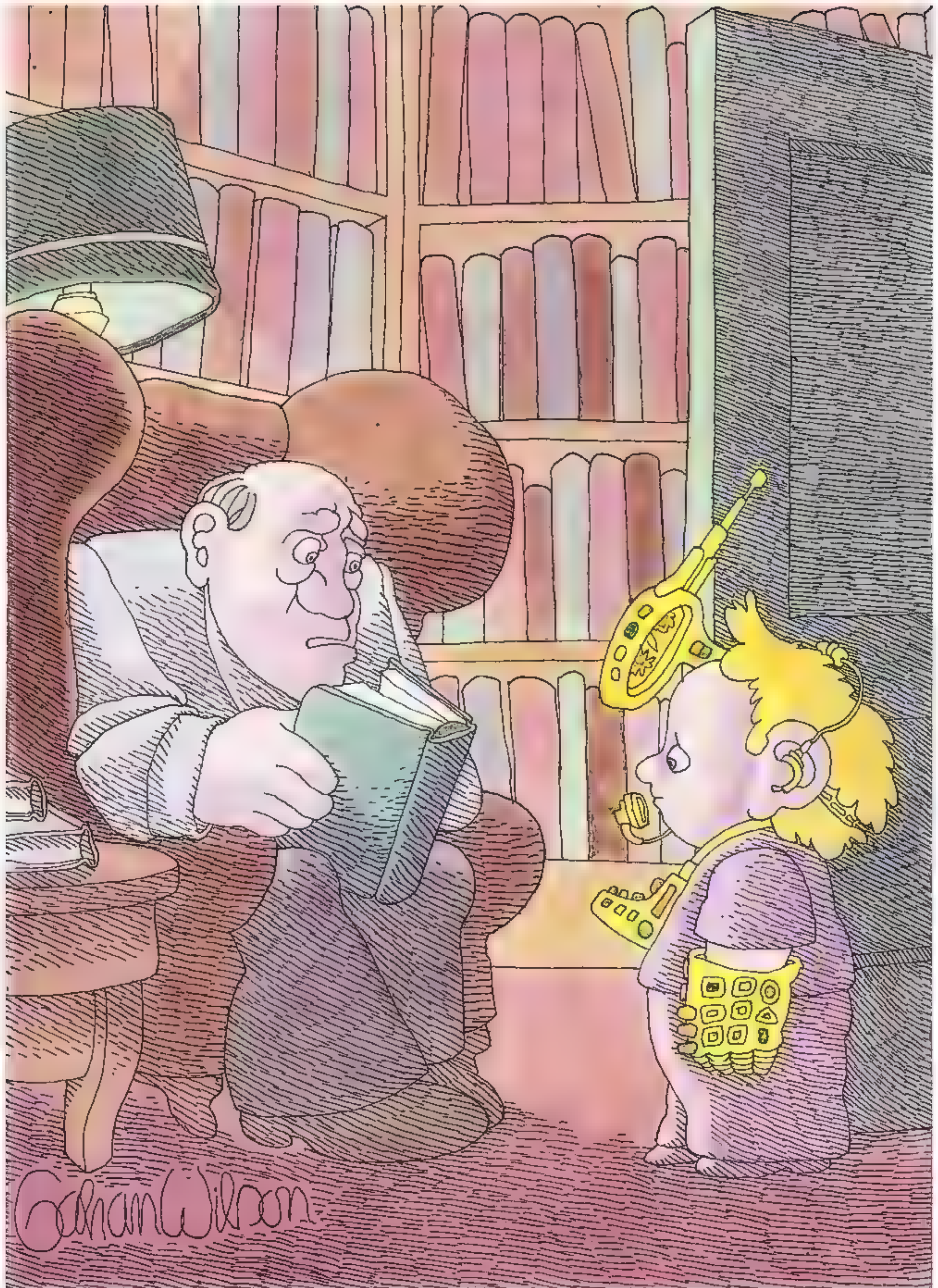
"Time to go, guys—it's been real....!"



"It's all the violence that does it."



*"Yes sir, the place wouldn't be the same
without old Bosley here!"*



"It's a book."



"You put your family in with the aluminum cans again, Mrs. Price."



"Tell us again how you made up lawyers!"



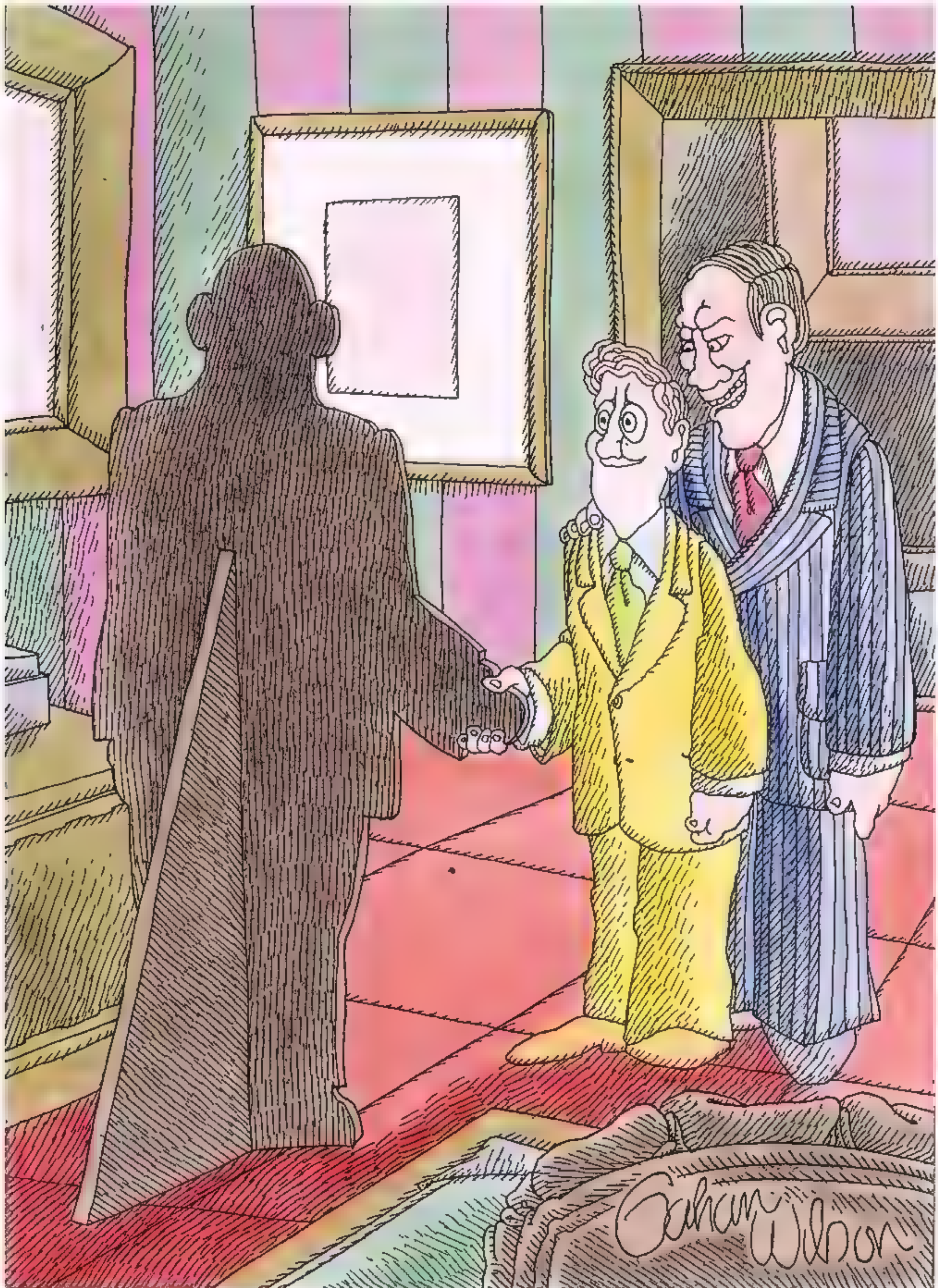
"I've had just about as much of this as I'm going to take!"



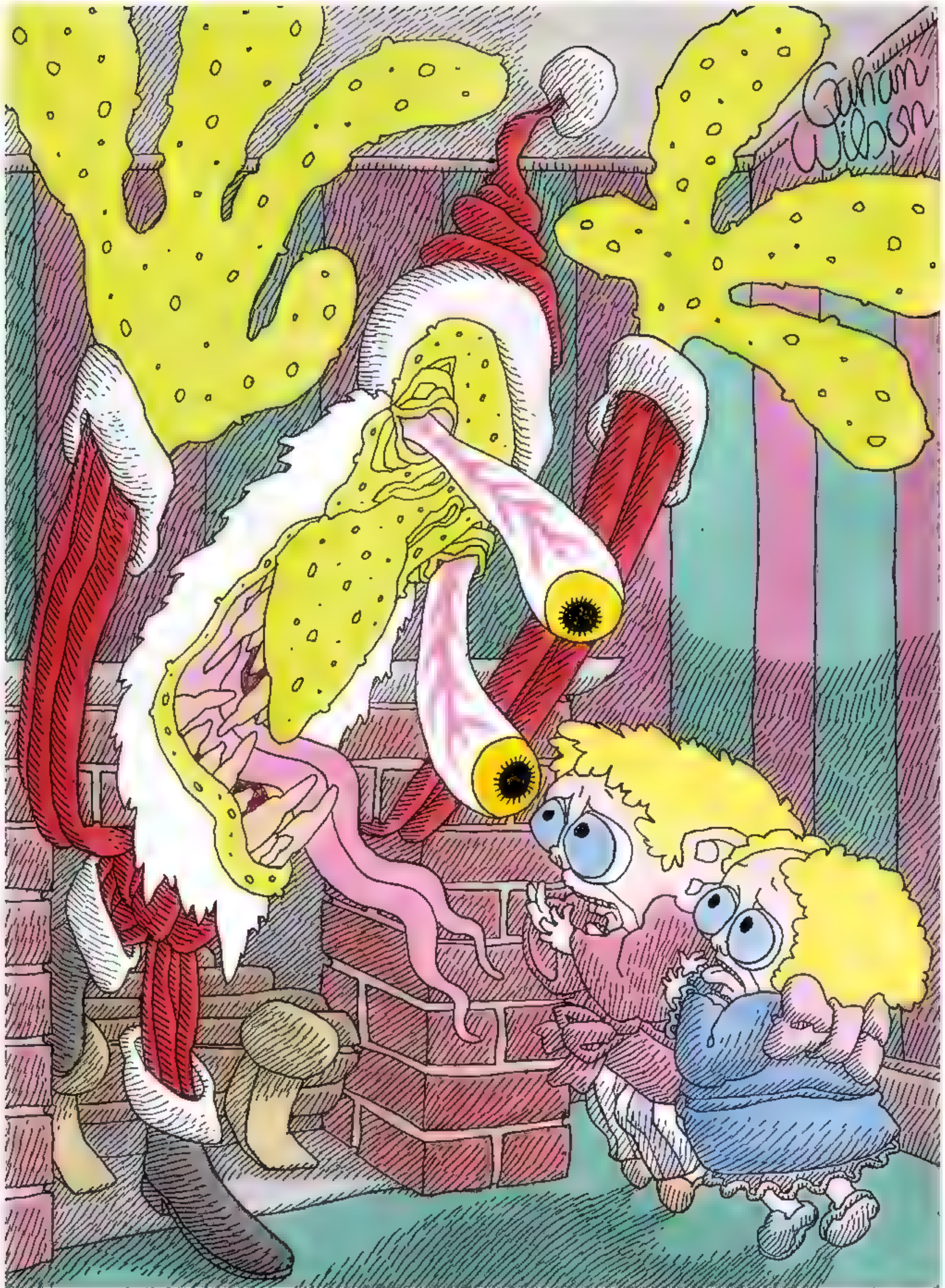
*"For God's sake, Parker, show some guts
and stand up to them!"*



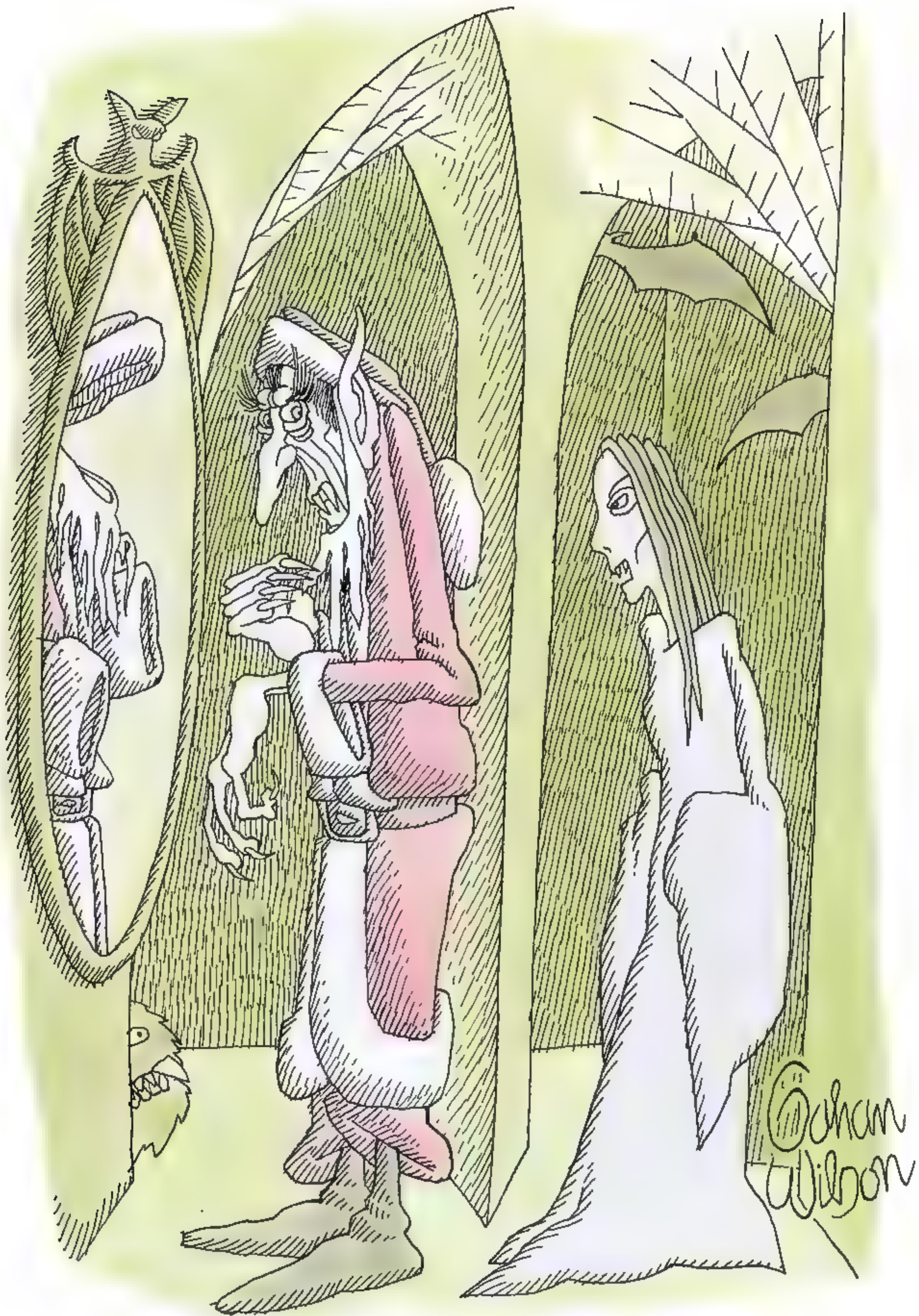
"Don't worry, Mr. and Mrs. Turner, we're doing everything we can to avoid a malpractice suit."



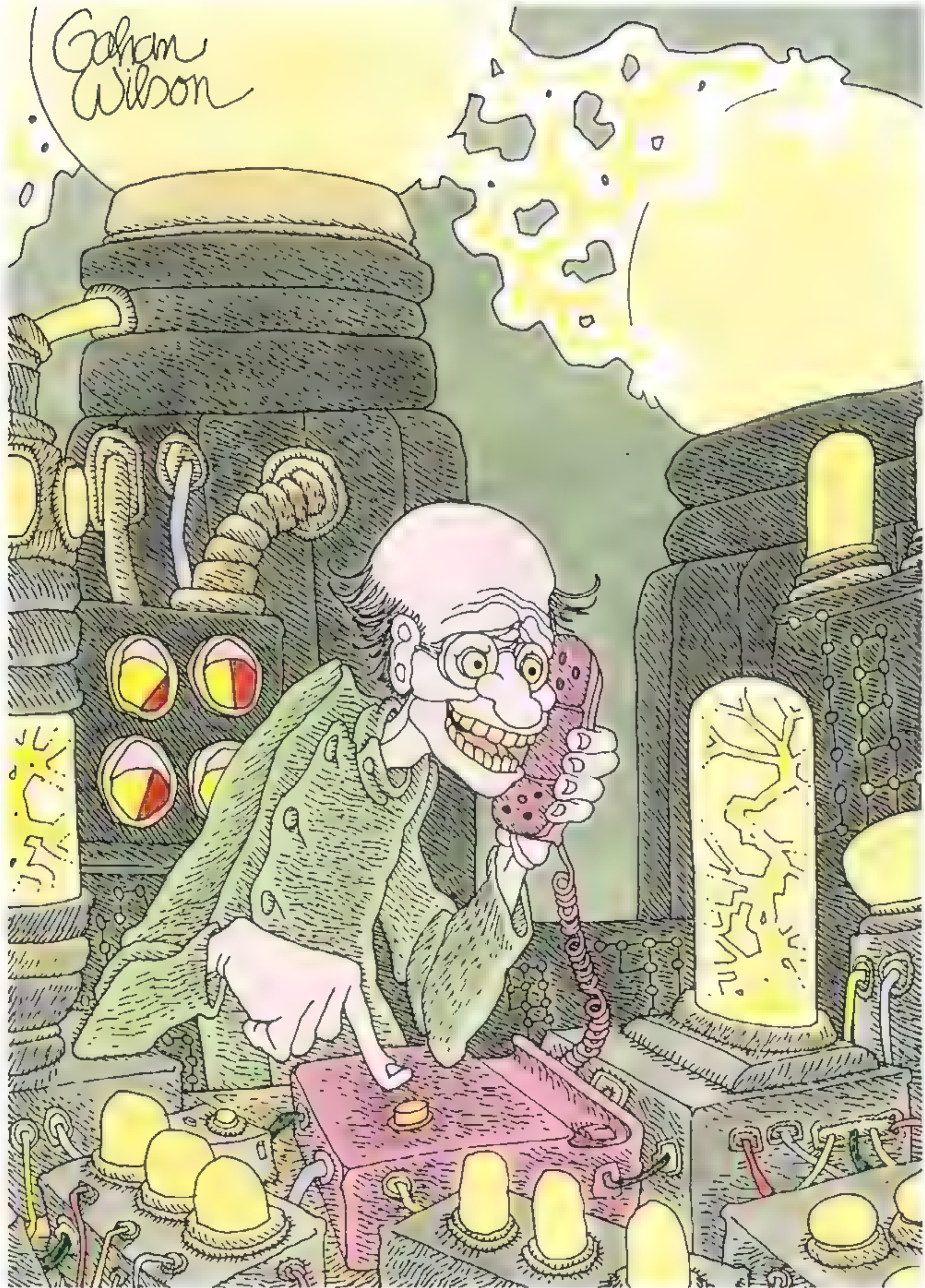
*"And someday, when you're a little further up the corporate ladder,
maybe we'll let you meet J.R. himself!"*



"Whoops! Sorry, wrong planet."



"Believe me—if you could see yourself, you'd drop the whole idea!"



"I'm so glad you've called to offer me this investment opportunity because it gives me a chance to test my new telephonic death ray."



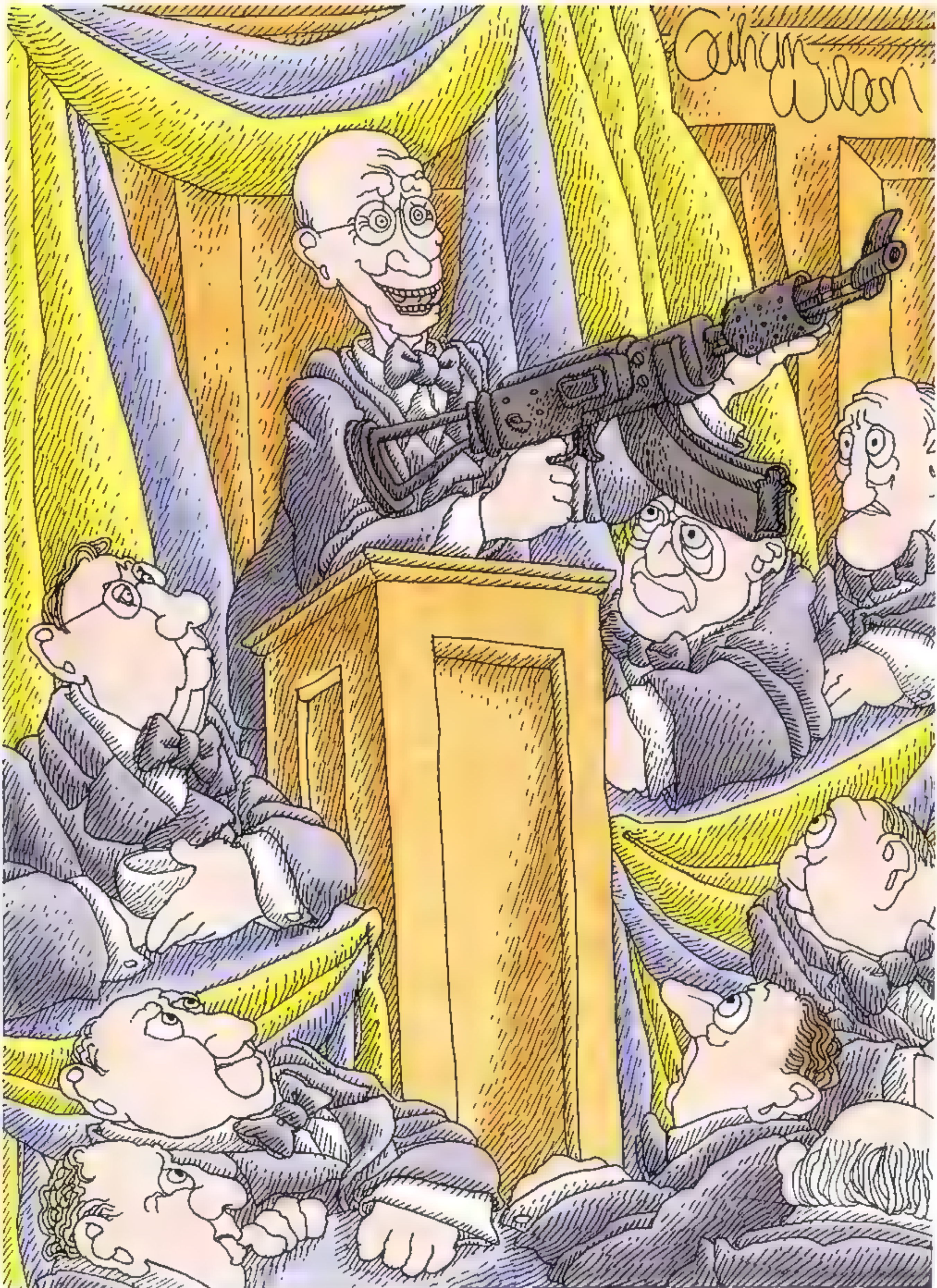




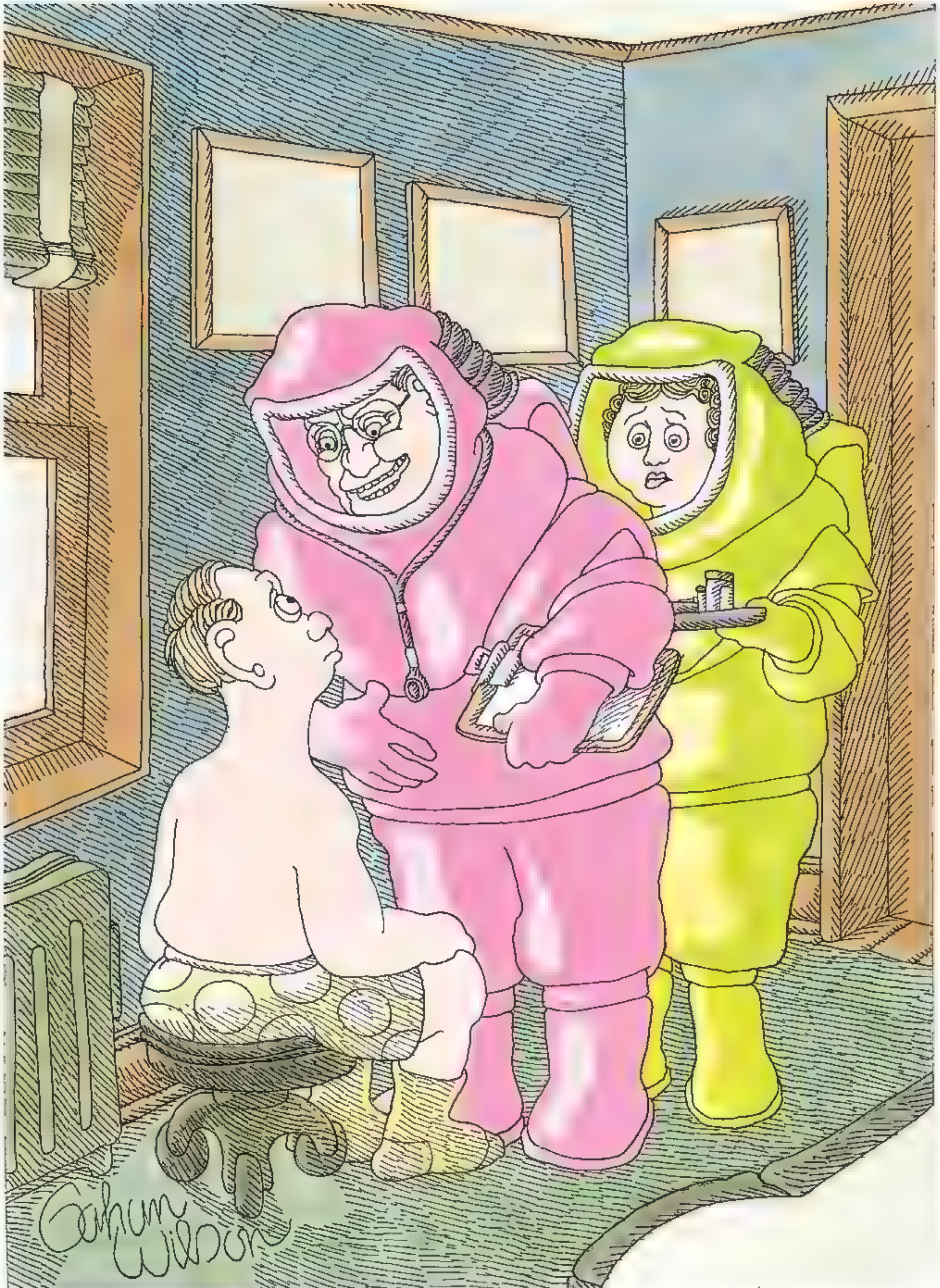
"I was just wondering, Mr. Parker, when you planned to come by and pick up Mrs. Parker?"



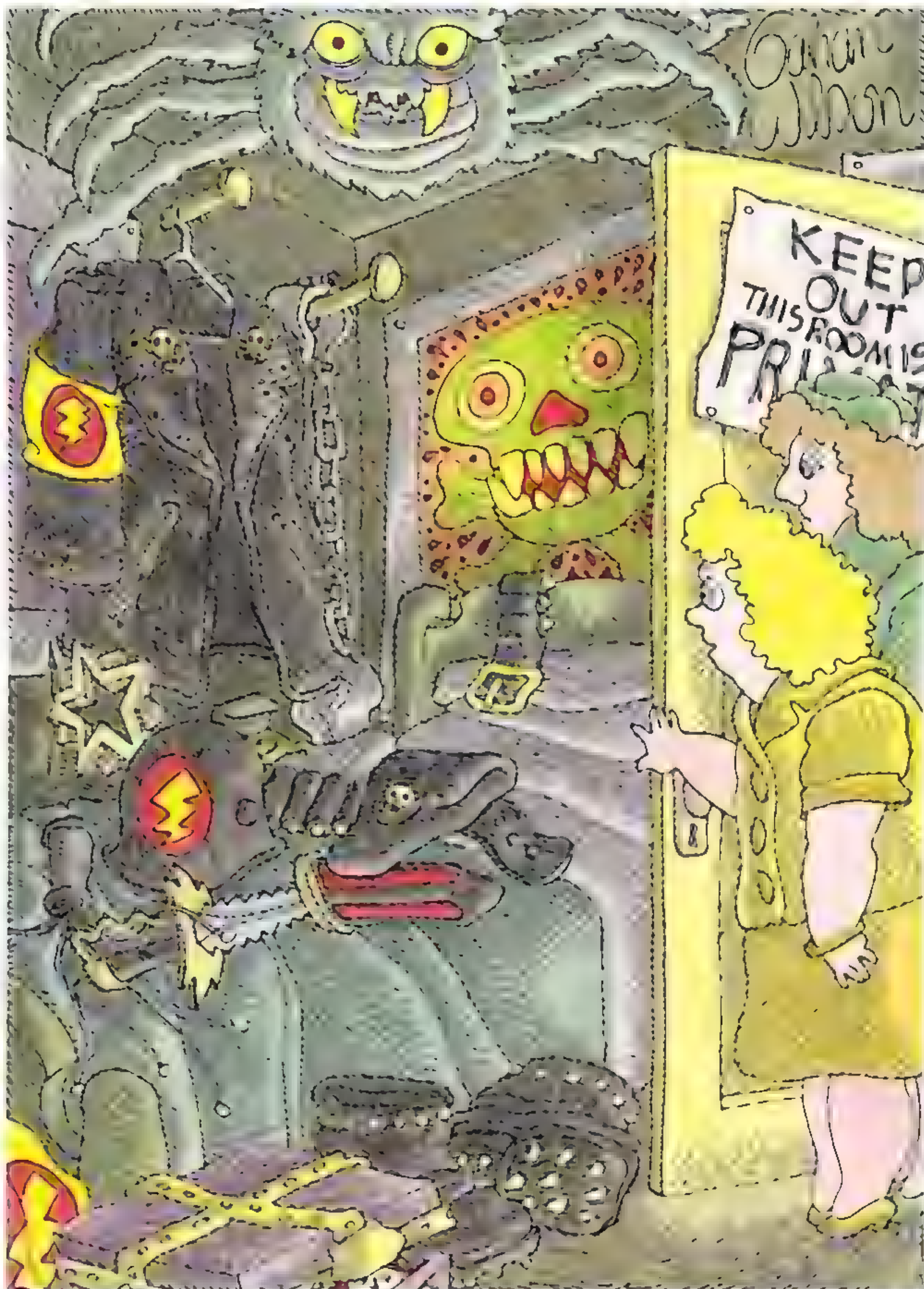
*"Oh, dear, I was afraid it might turn out
to be this kind of spring."*



"And now, if you wouldn't mind, I'd like to fulfill a little dream which has been growing in me since I first came to work for this corporation."



"Please don't be alarmed, Mr. Parker, but those preliminary tests indicate the advisability of a few precautions."



"I thought it was just a phase, but now that he's in his 40s I'm not so sure!"



"Edwin is a great admirer of the late Howard Hughes."



*"They must be from a time when it was
safe to meet in the park at night."*

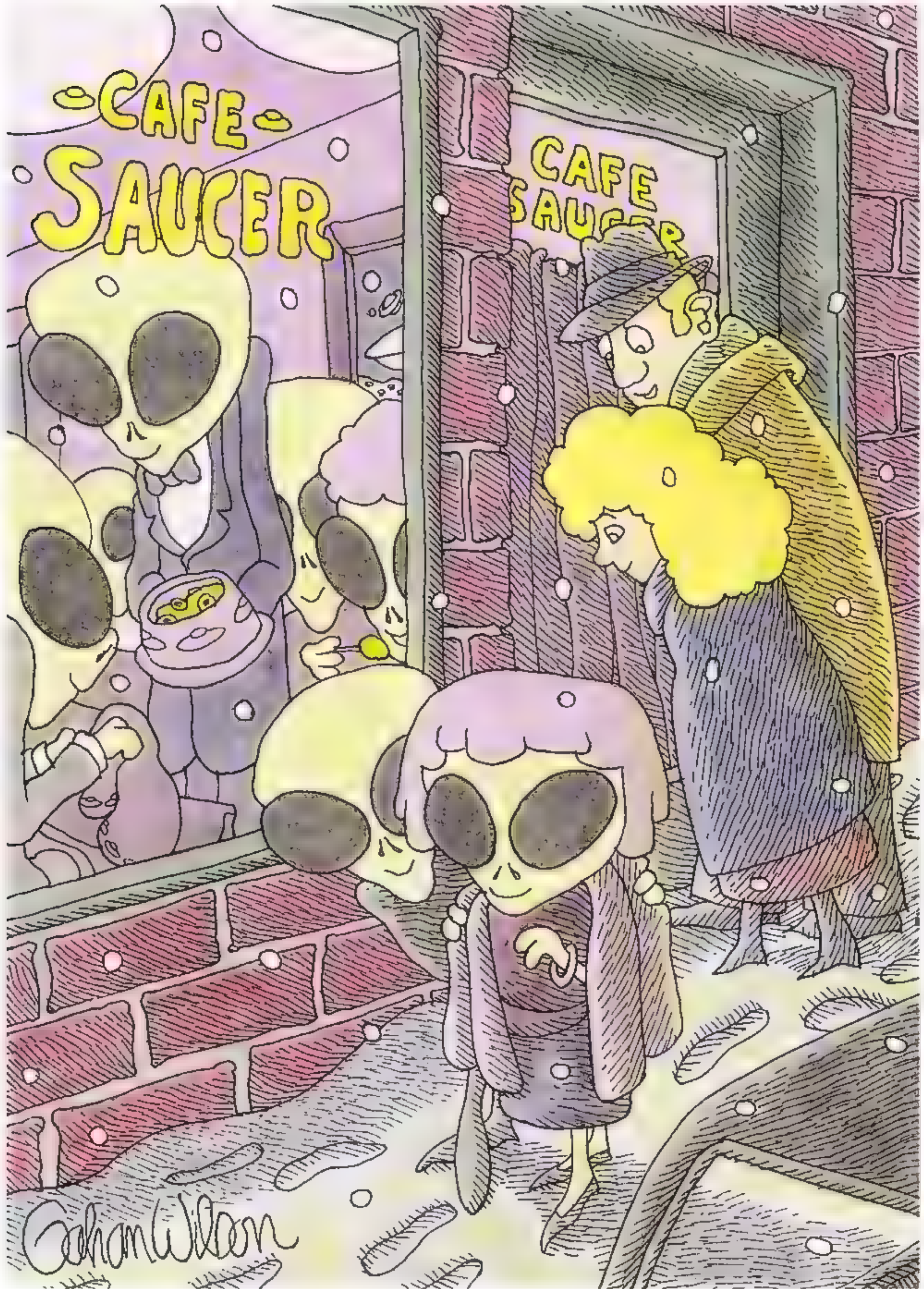


Graham
Wilson

"I knew I heard caroling last night!"



"OK, now I'll be the Ethics Committee and you'll be me."



"Wait until you experience the cuisine."



"It's obviously very fond of you, sir!"



"I see you've noticed my trophies!"



"Very well, Jennings, you may remove the chair."



"So that's what happened to little June Marie!"

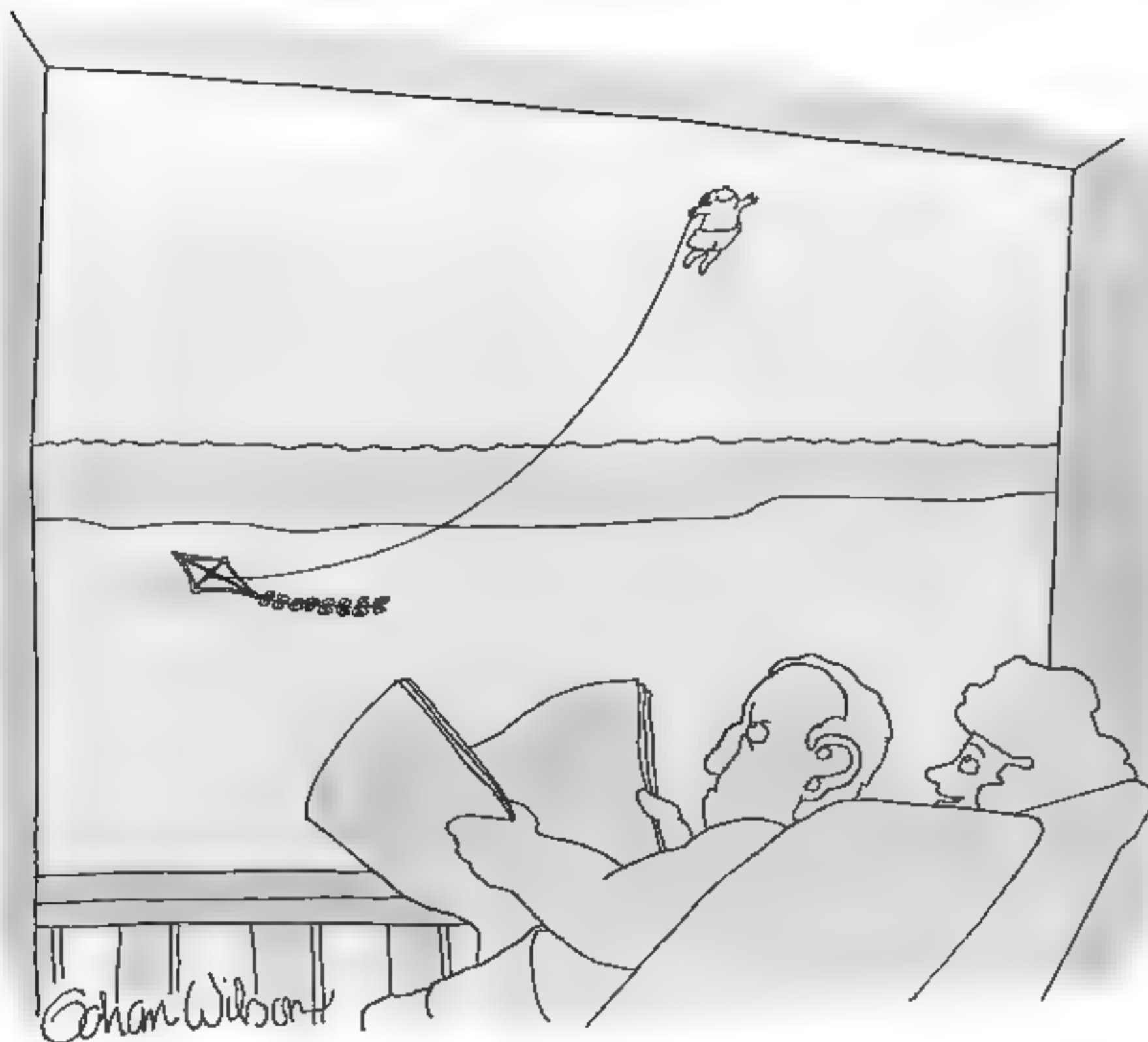


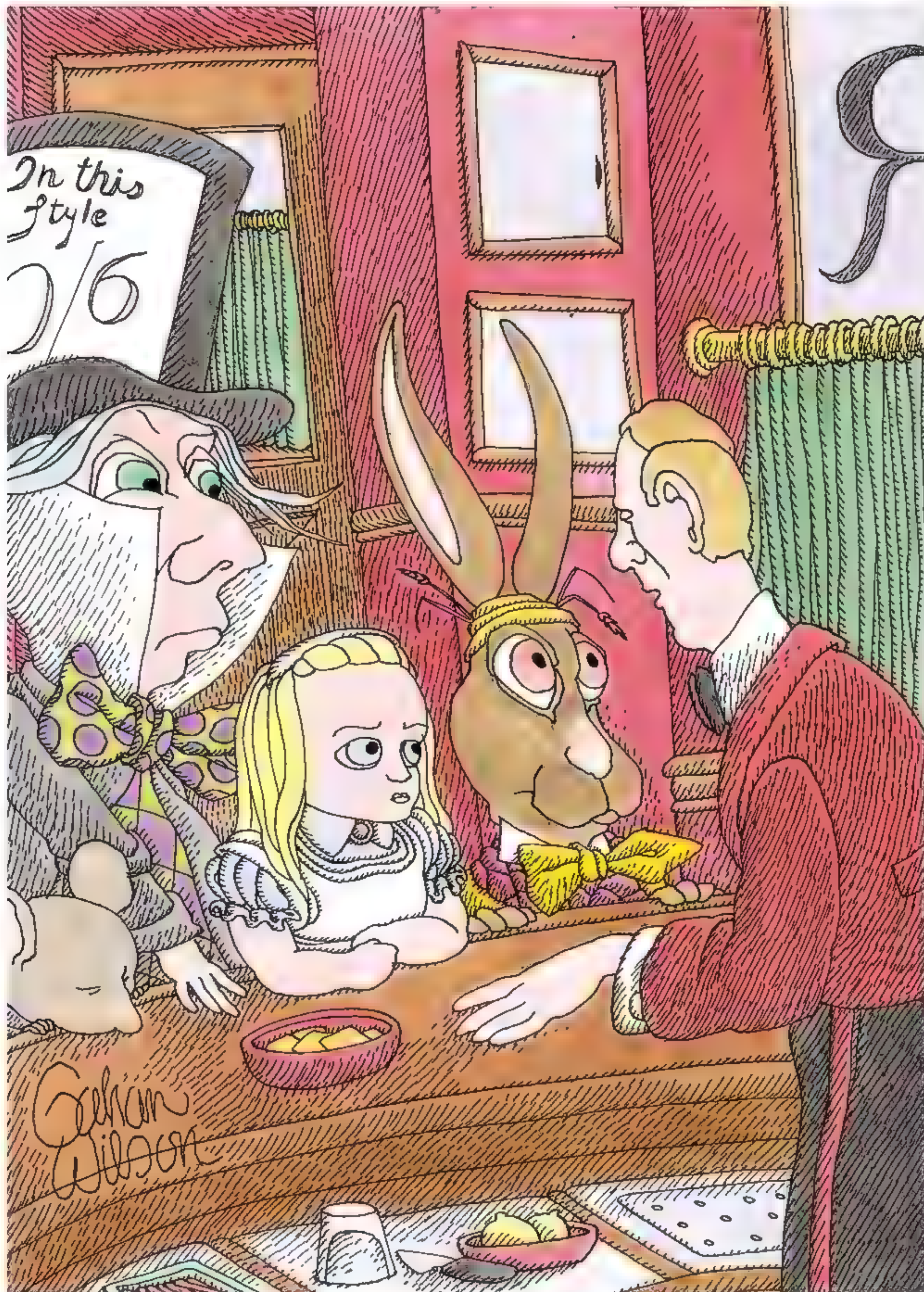
"I'm afraid you'll have to speak to my agent!"

*"You see what I mean
about the wine."*

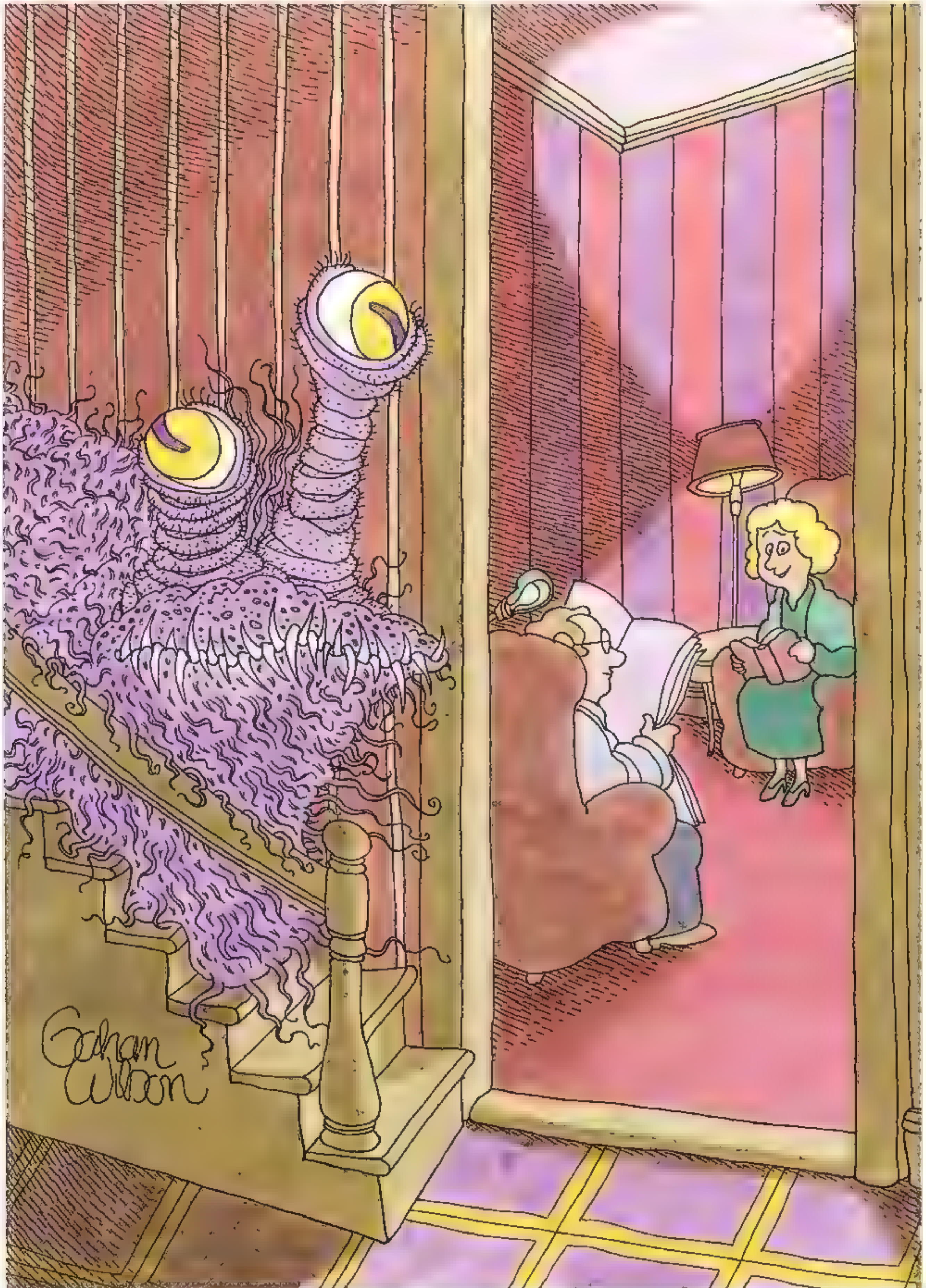


*"He may be doing it
wrong, but it looks
like he's having fun."*

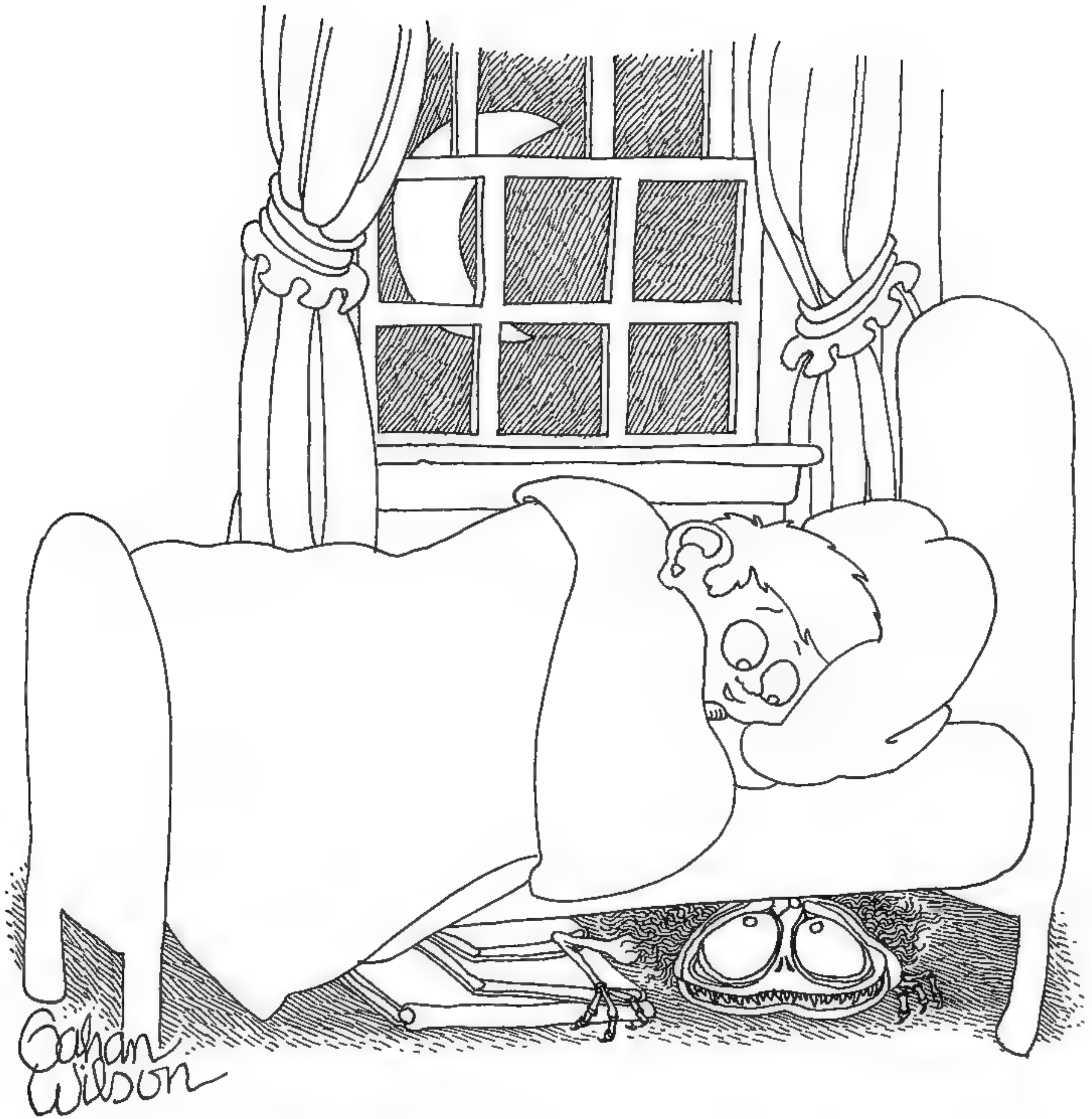




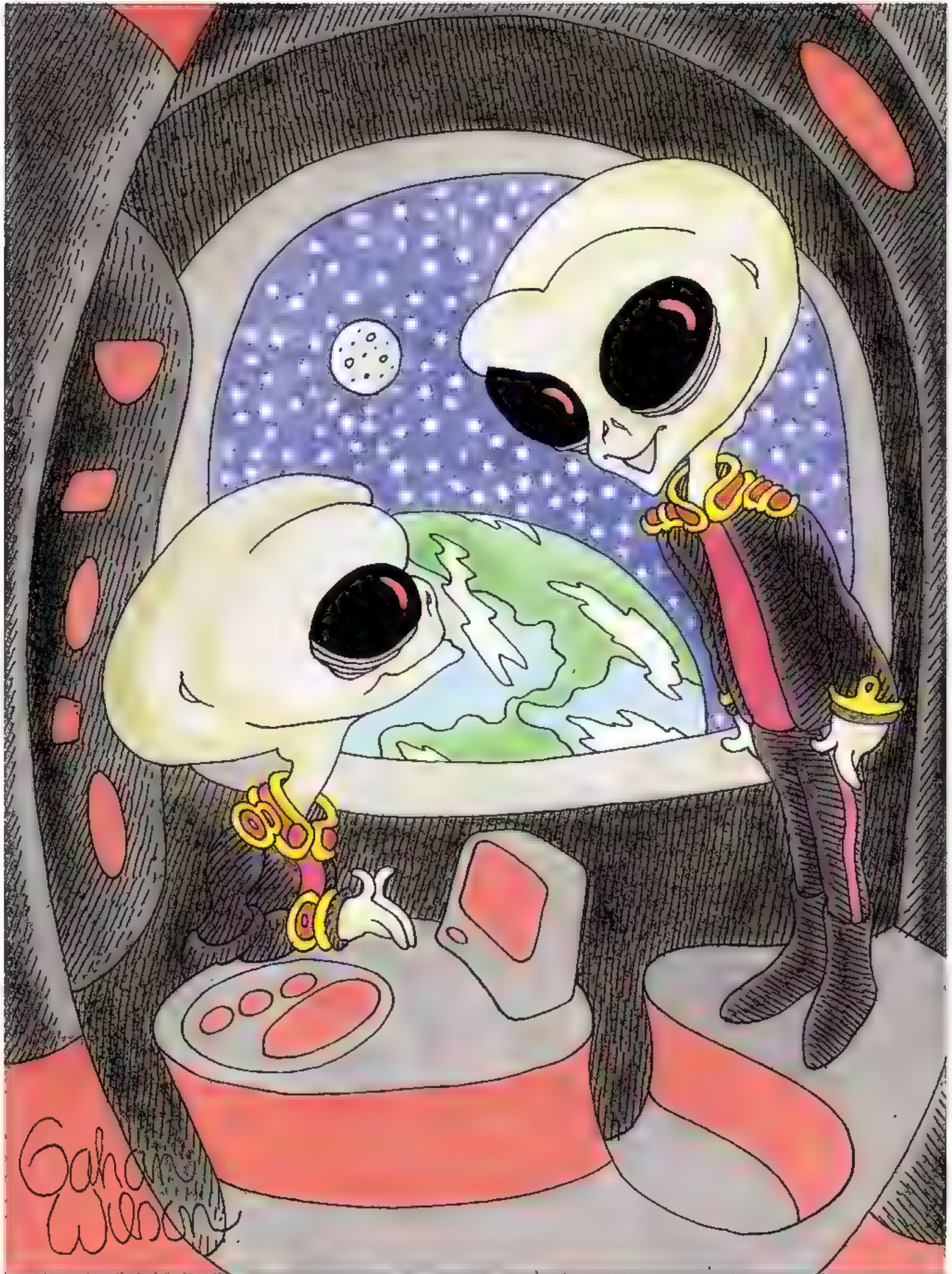
*"I'm sorry, Miss, but I'll have to ask you
for some proof of age."*



"Don't you just love the way these old houses creak?"



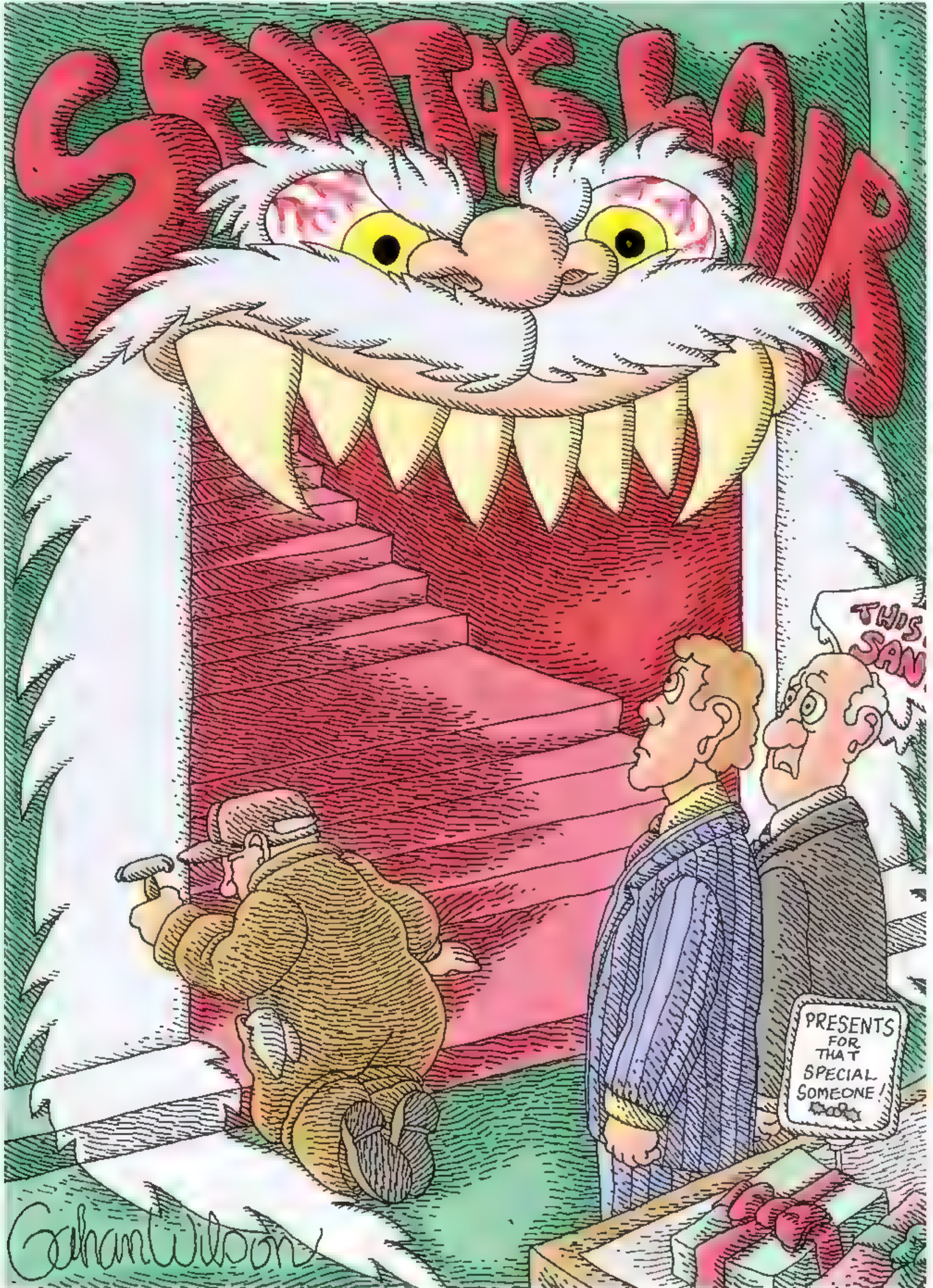
"Read me the story again about the closet monster."



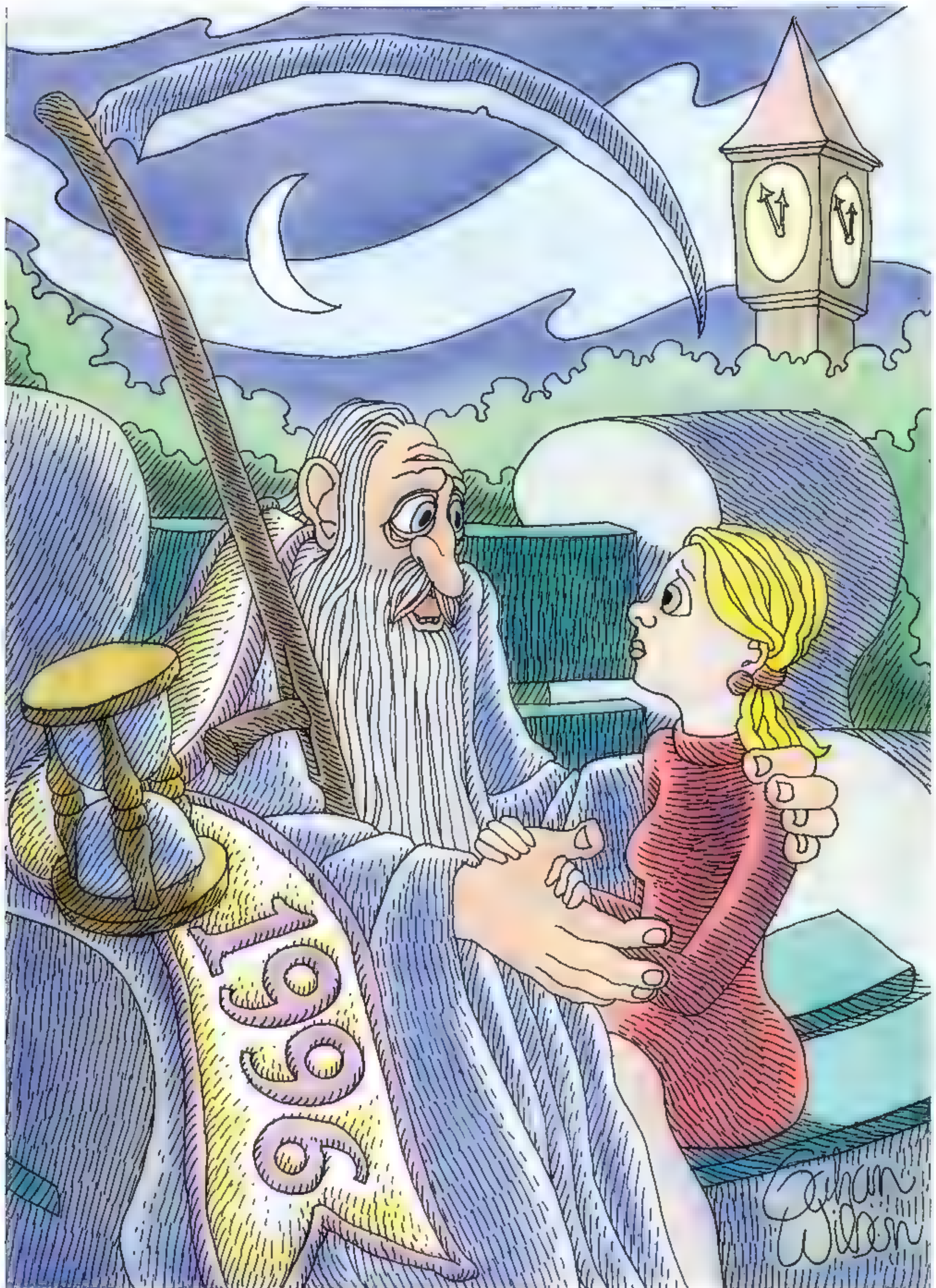
"We've completely taken over Earth's political systems, profoundly altered its ecology in our favor, and—outside of a few nutcases—all of its inhabitants refuse to admit we even exist!"



"I've told you, that's part of the problem, Doctor."



"Gee, I don't know—does it really say *Christmas*?"



"I'm afraid this really is goodbye, my darling!"

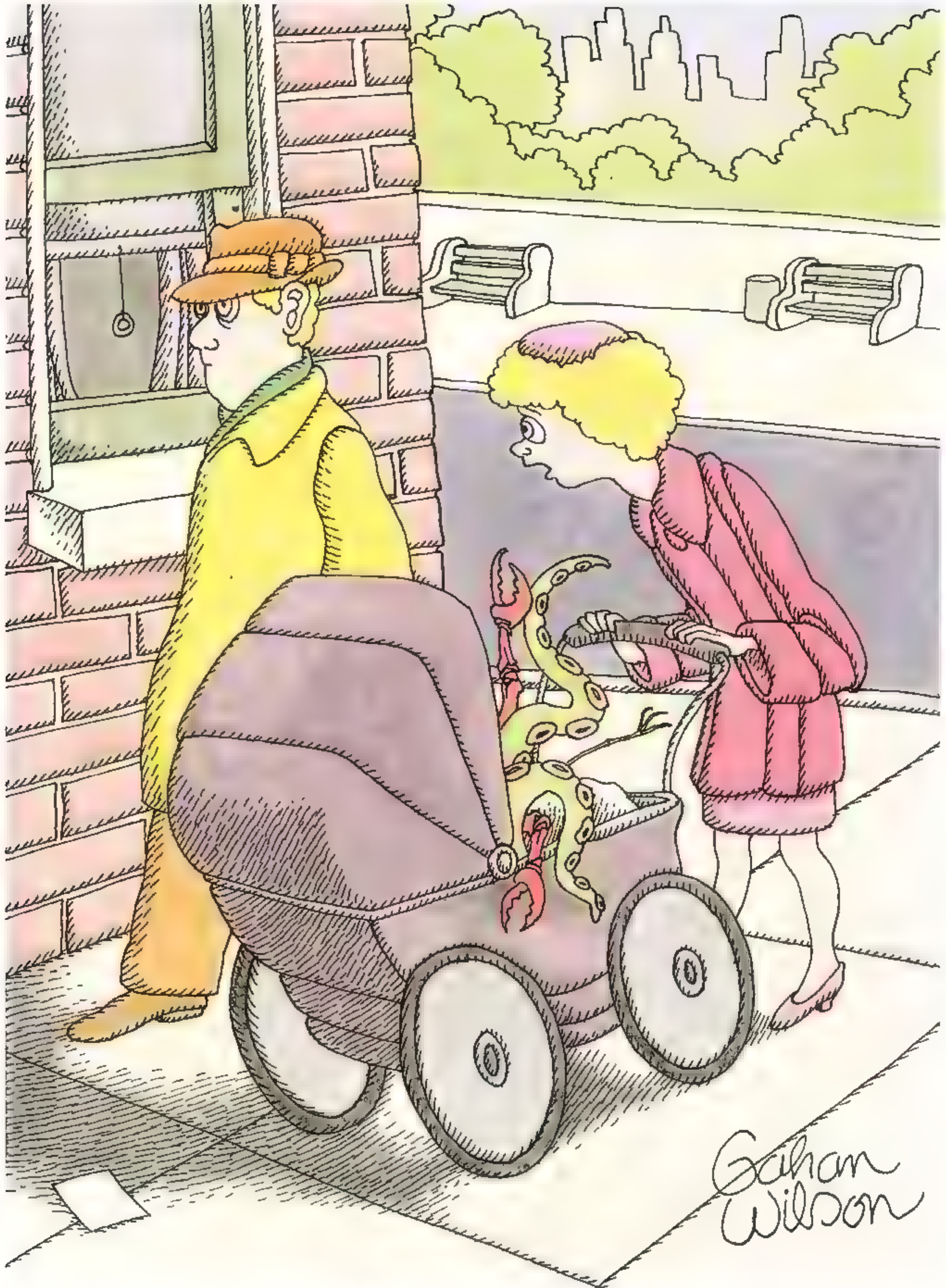


Graham
Wilson

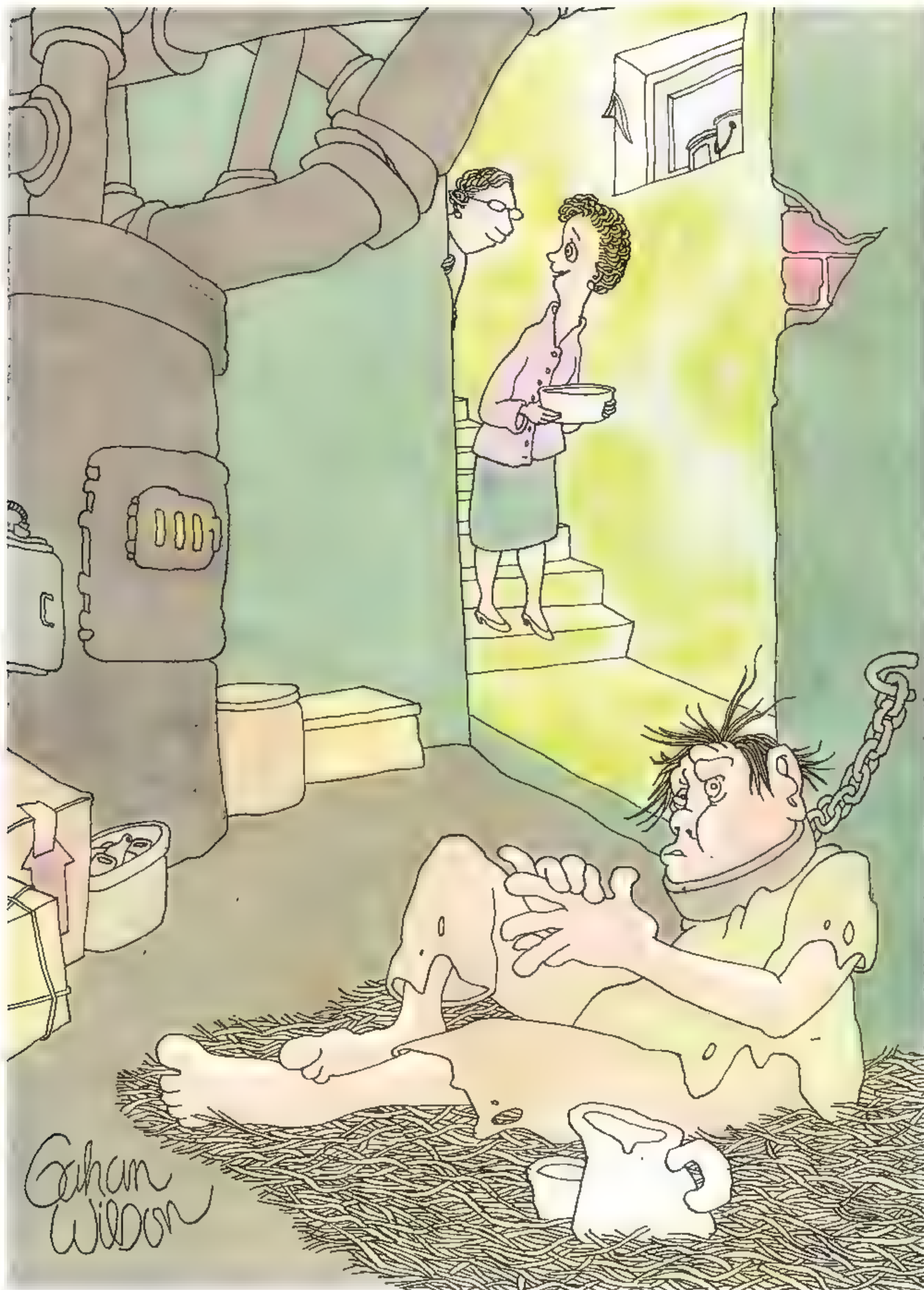
*"...And your job, of course, is to enter
through the chimney!"*



"No sacrifices until you buy the idol, sir."



"I think something's wrong with the baby, dear!"

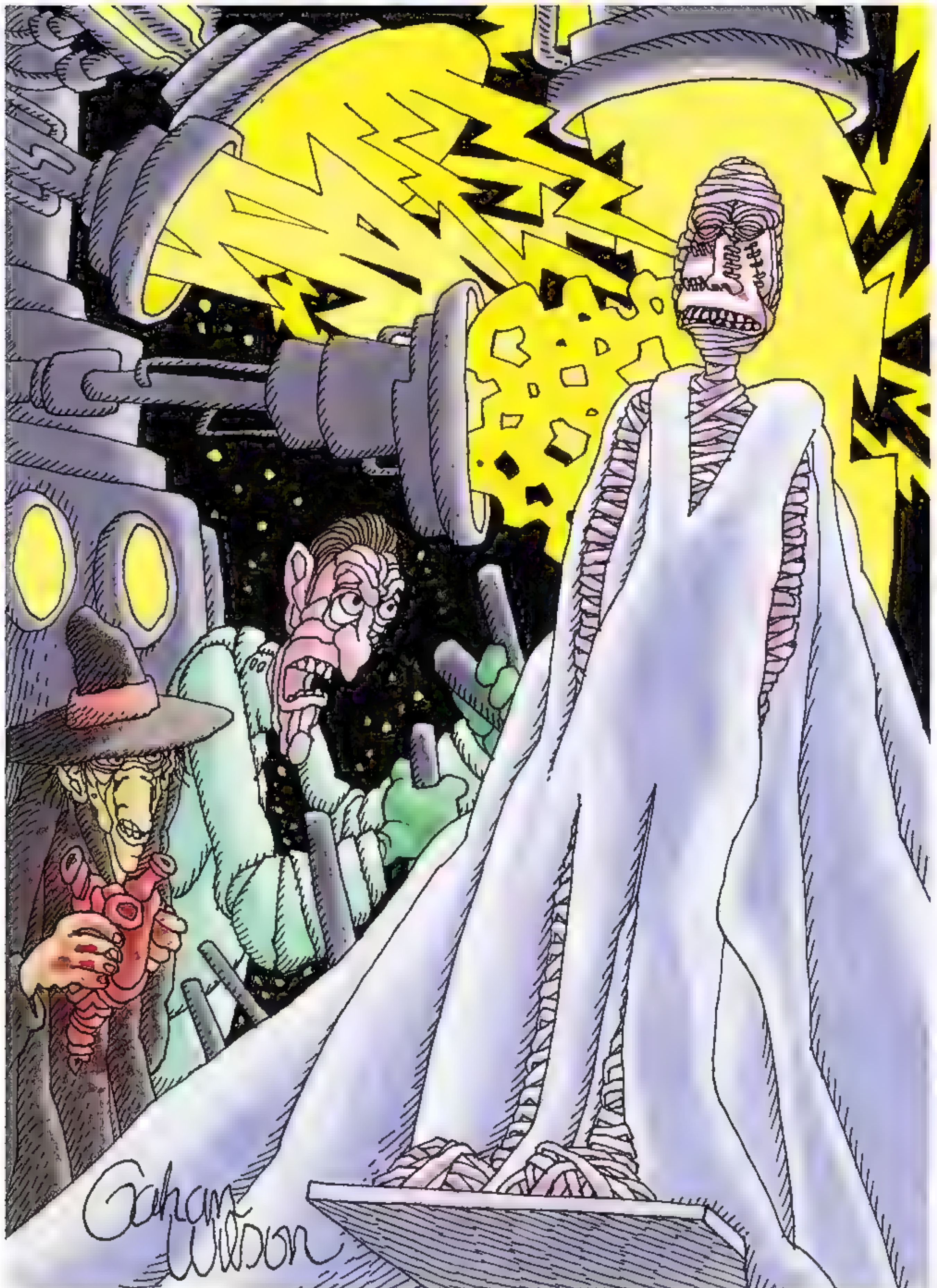


*"I did with Harry just what you did with your Fred and,
I must say, it's really worked out wonderfully!"*



Graham
Wilson

"Oh—and look out for the shark!"



*"Of course the HMO never stops bitching
about my electricity bills!"*



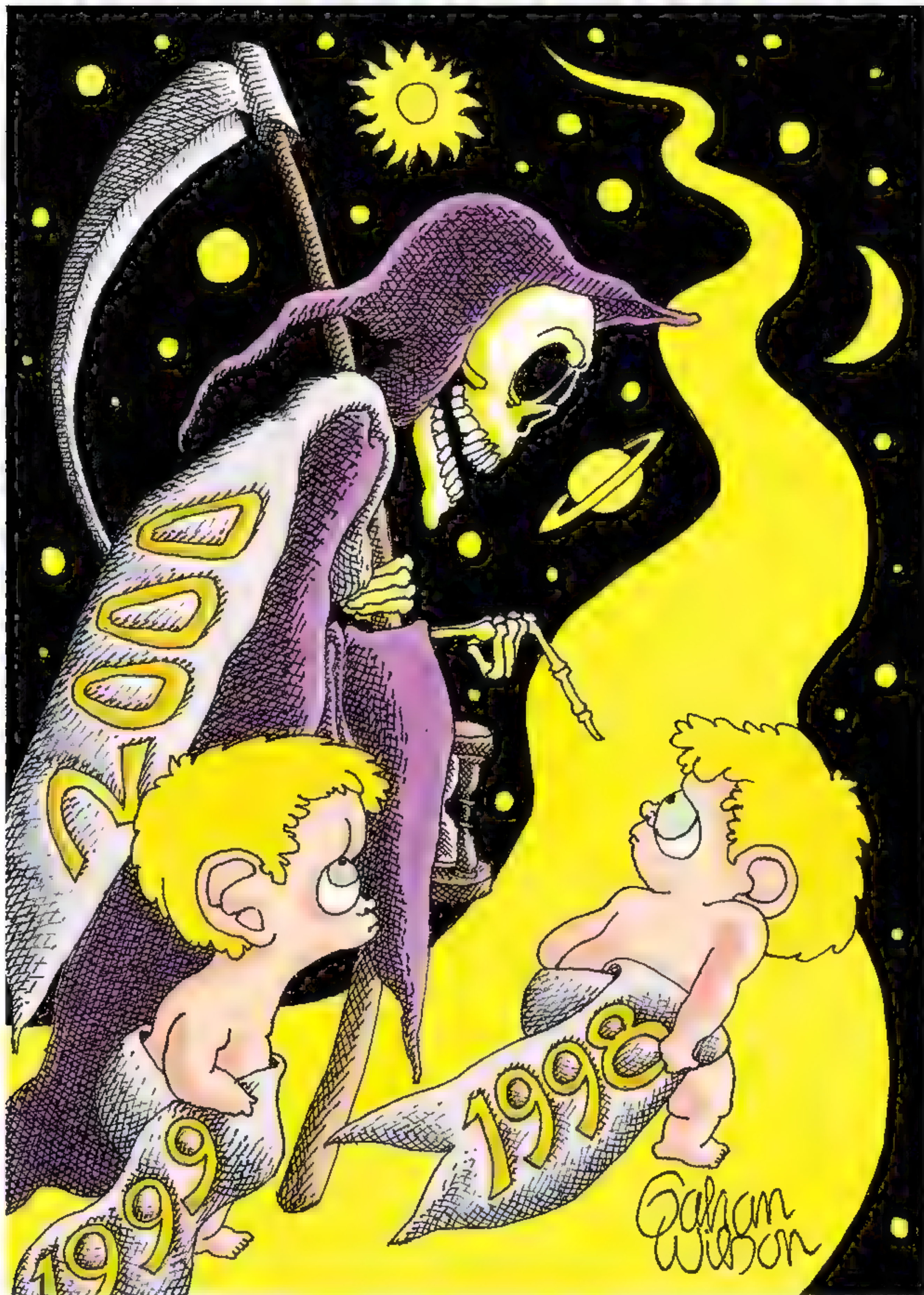
"The fangs stay!"



*"Well, I guess this rock sample pretty much clears up
any lingering doubts about life on Mars!"*



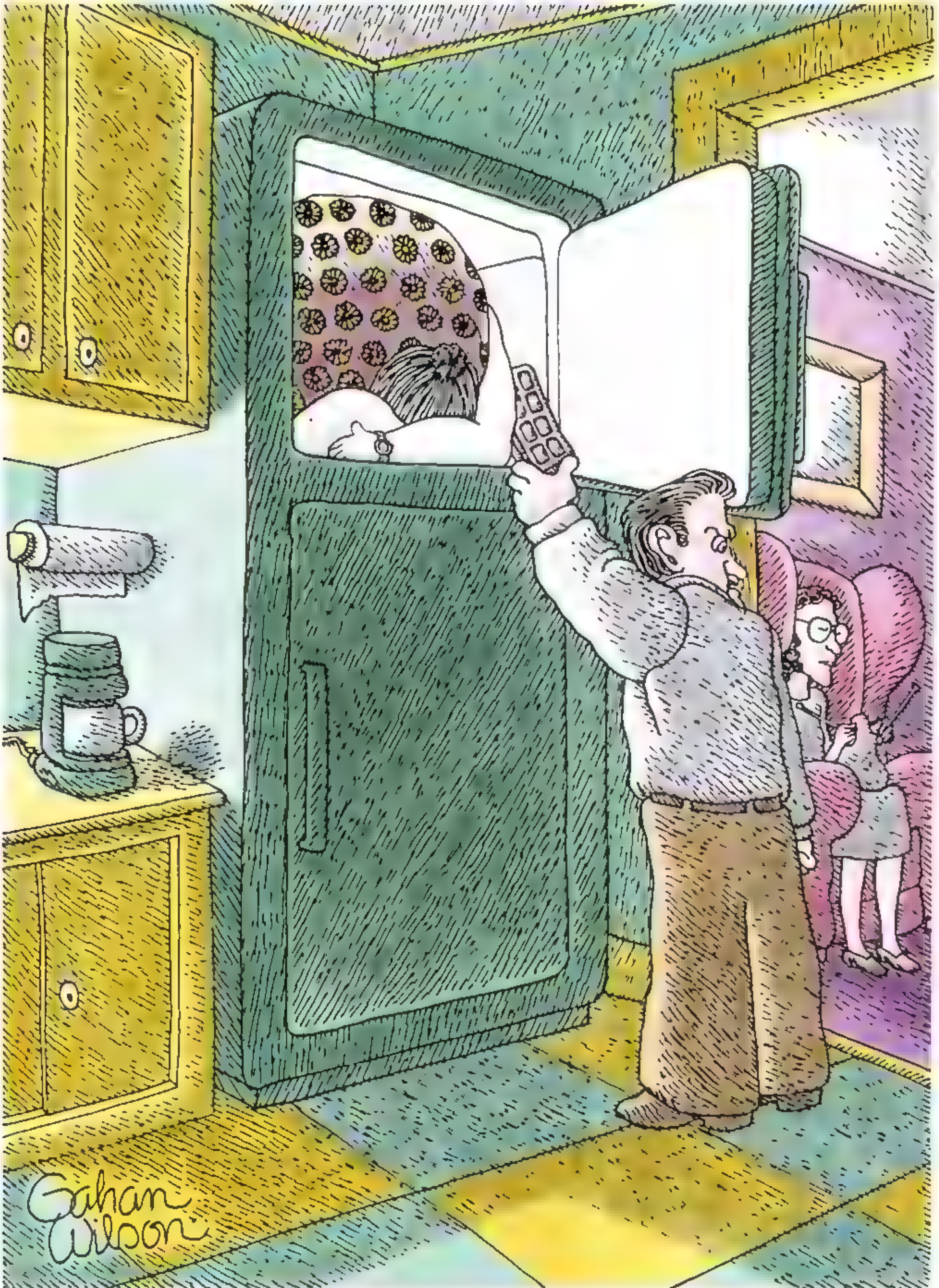
"Damn—we'll have to hire a new one!"



"Now remember not to give away the big surprise!"



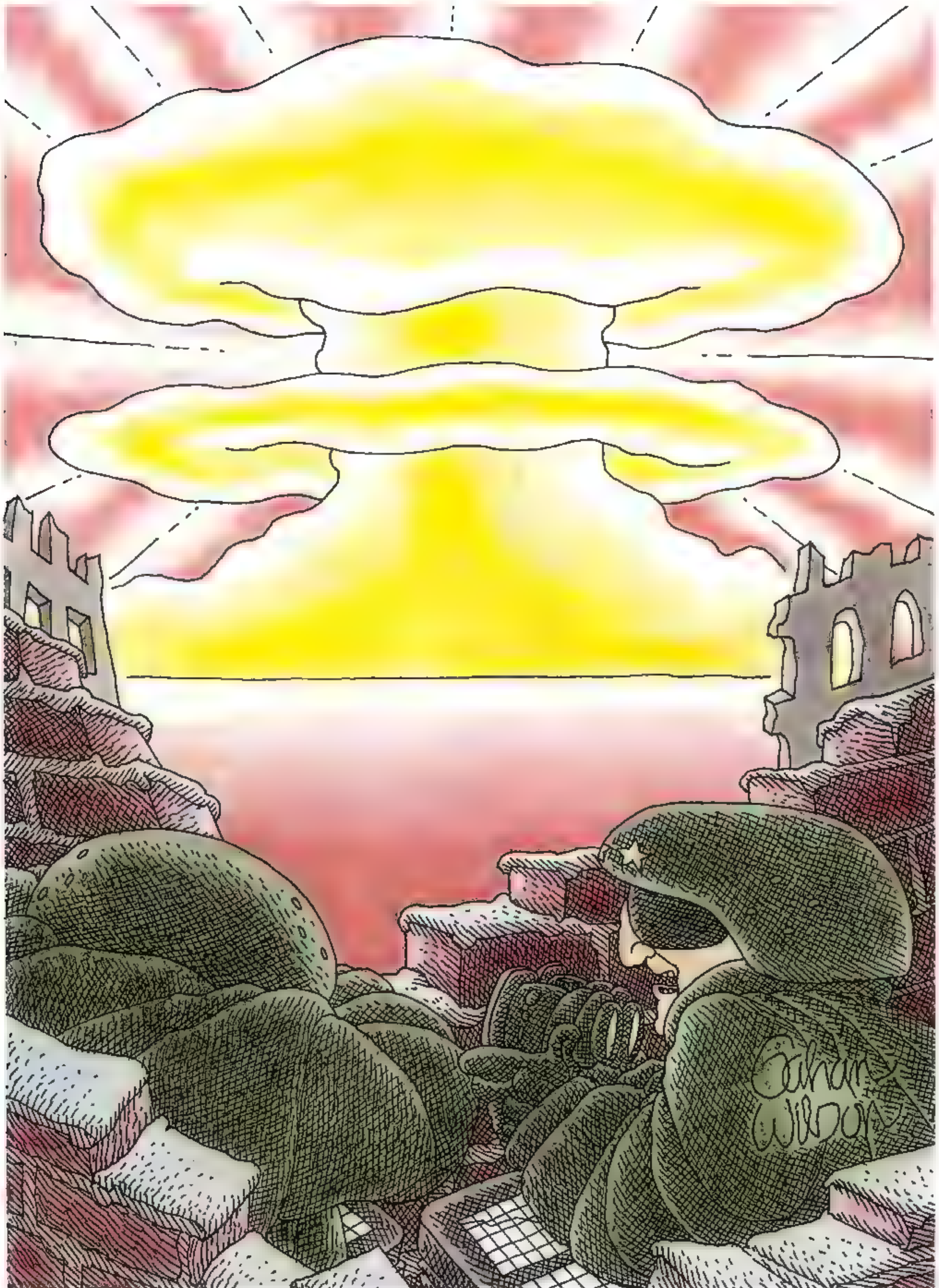
"So much for their attempted reconciliation."



"Your mother is taking up too much freezer space!"

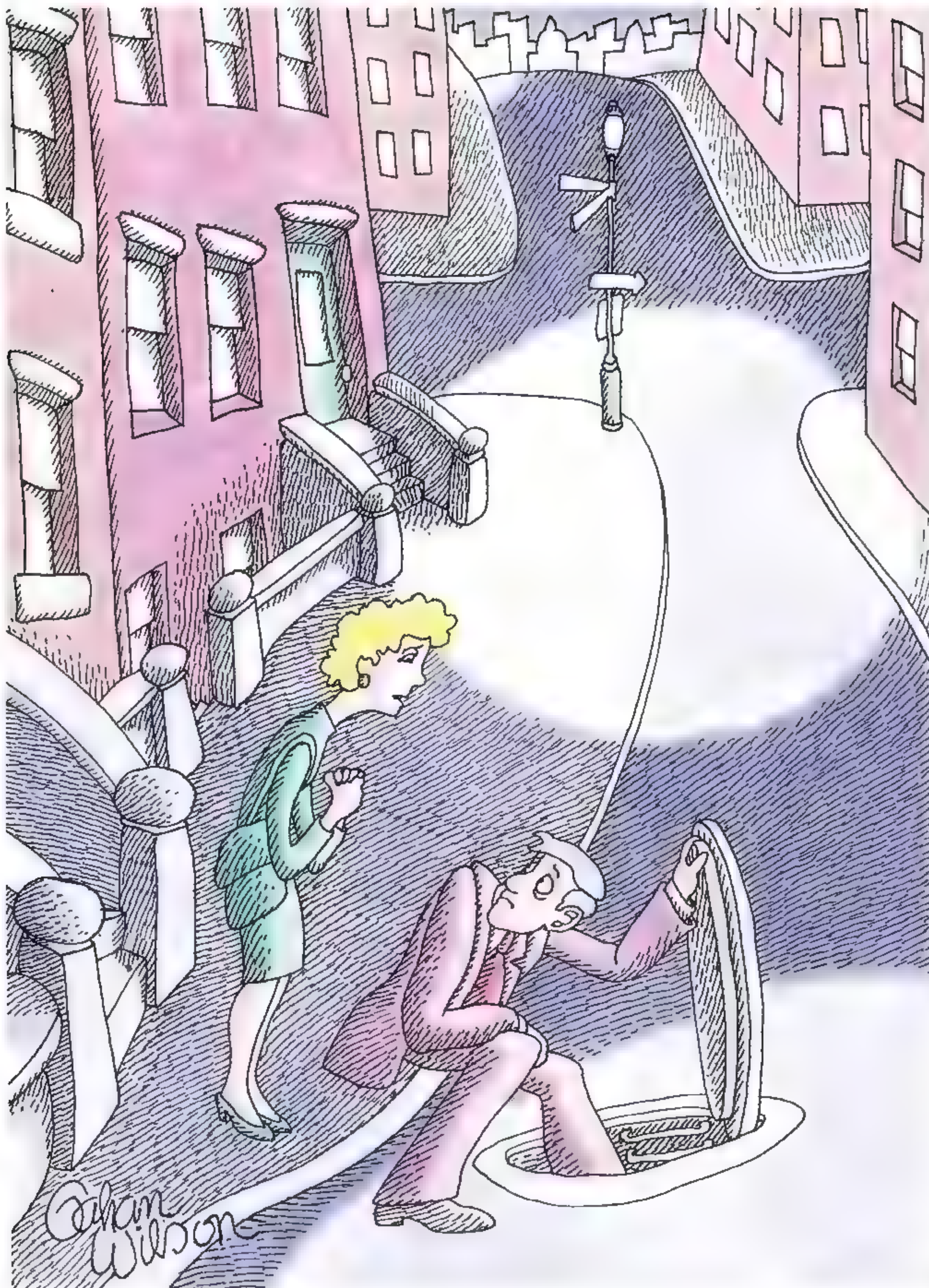


"I'm stepping out of line!"



"This war on drugs is really getting out of hand!"





"Maybe we should go to my place after all!"



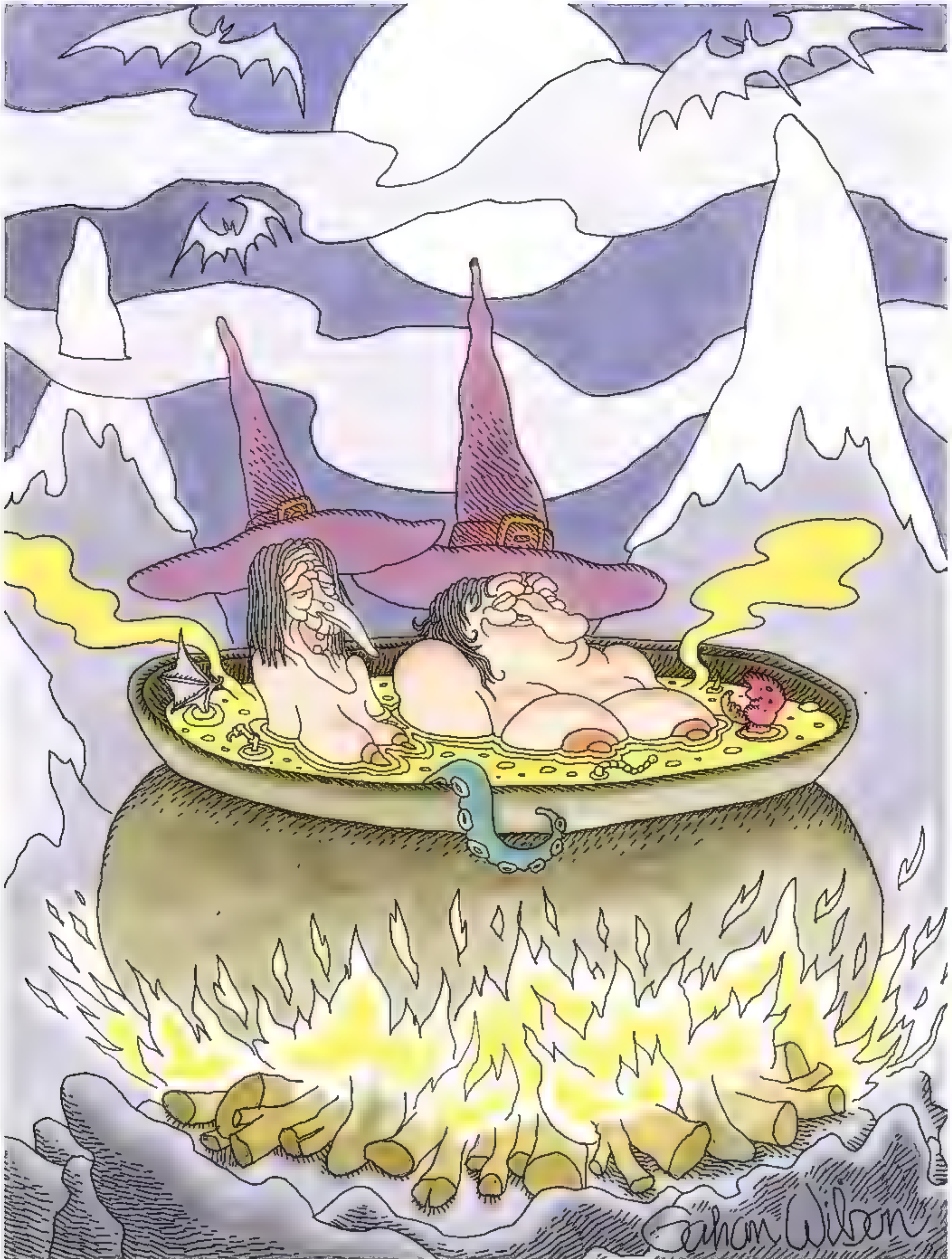
"We can't take him without you putting him in a plastic sack."



*"And that's the story about the camp counselor
who ate up all the little kids."*



"I don't like the looks of that!"



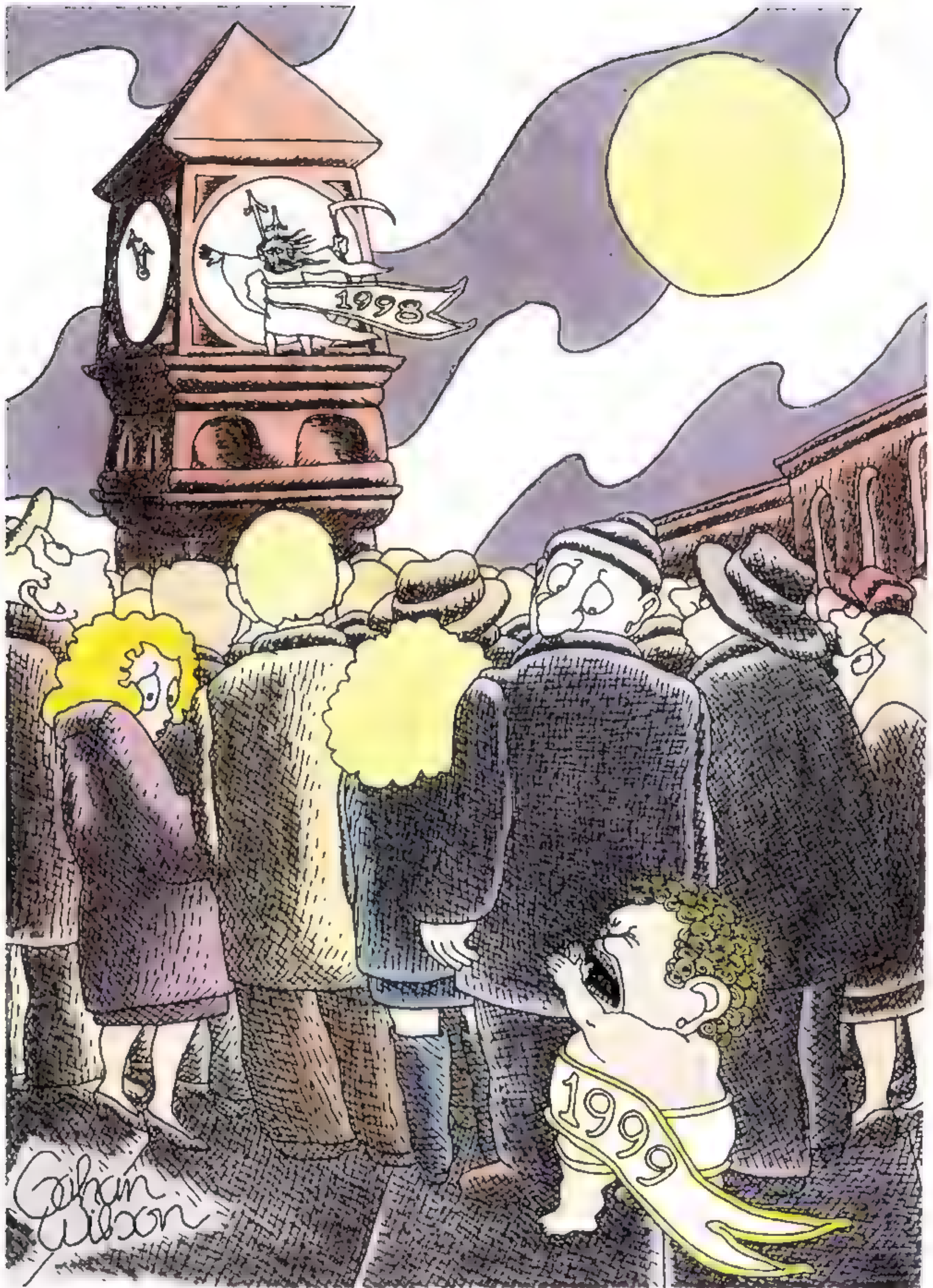
"I must say, this brew really soothes away the tensions!"



*"You have to give him back to his team once
you're through playing with him!"*



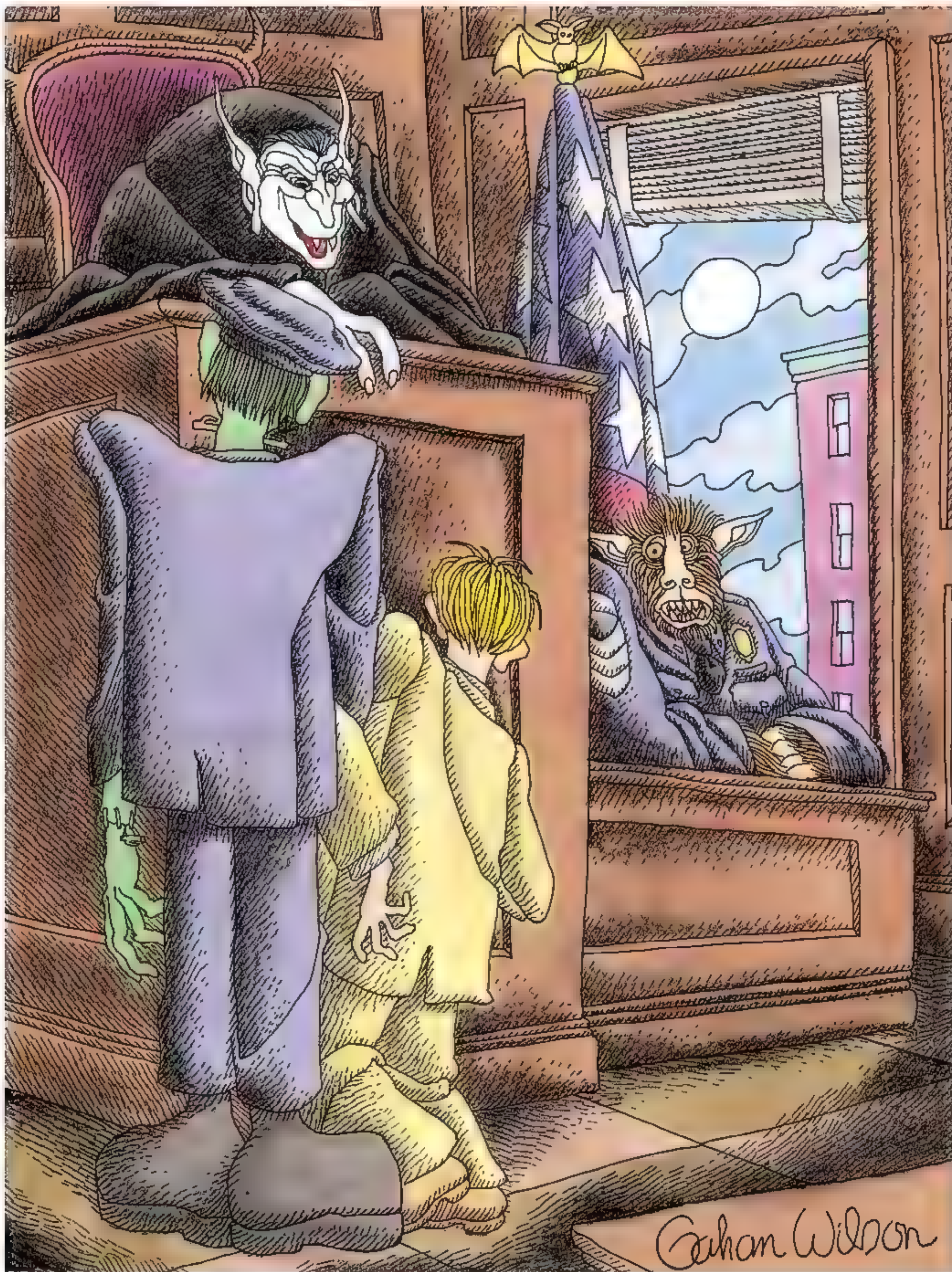
"Ho, Ho, Ho...!"



"Jump! Jump! Jump!"



"You are about to be swallowed whole!"



"This is what you get in night court, sonny."



"Hasn't lost his attitude, man!"



"And if it turns out none of these others does the trick, you can always say bye-bye with a bottleful of these babies!"

00

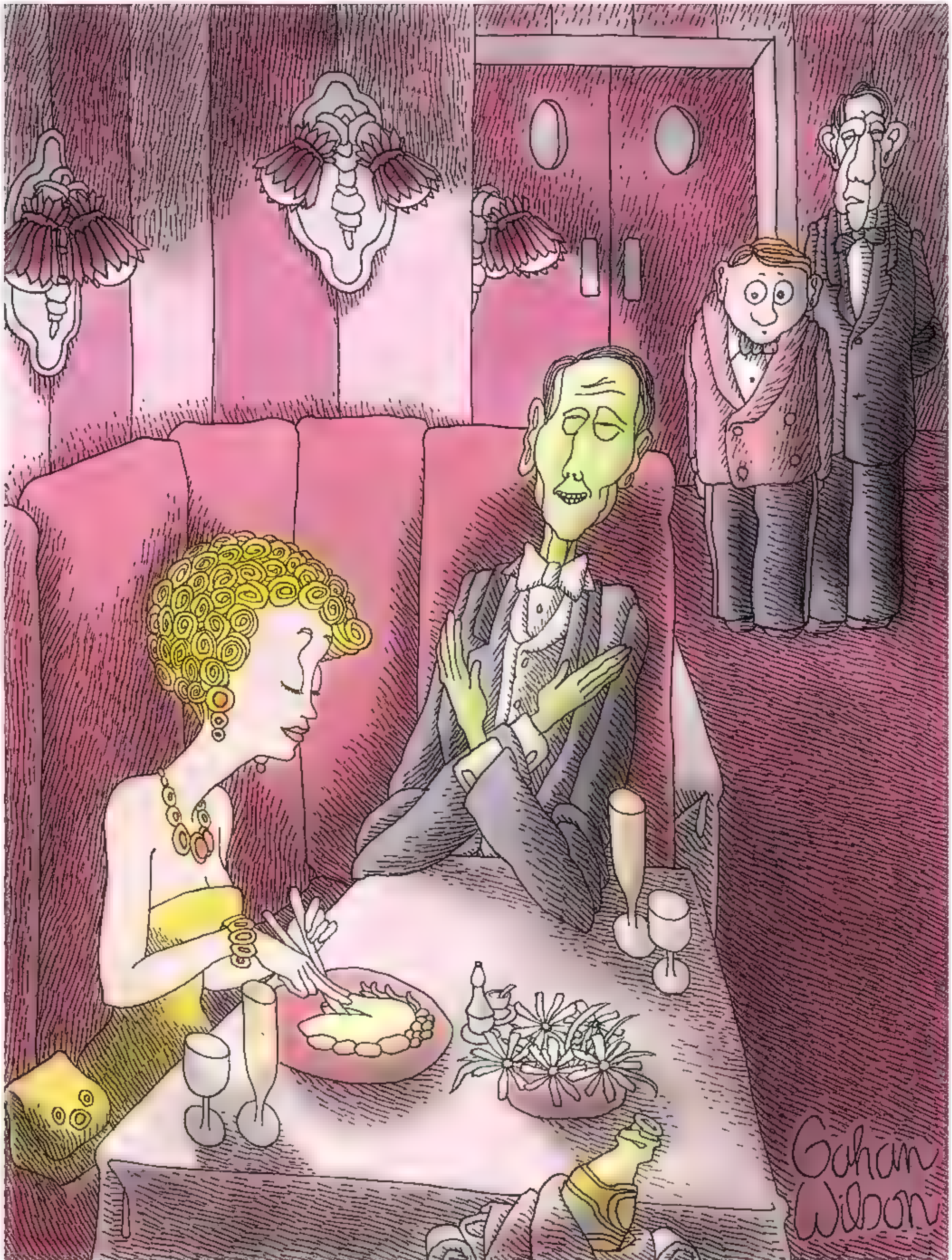


12

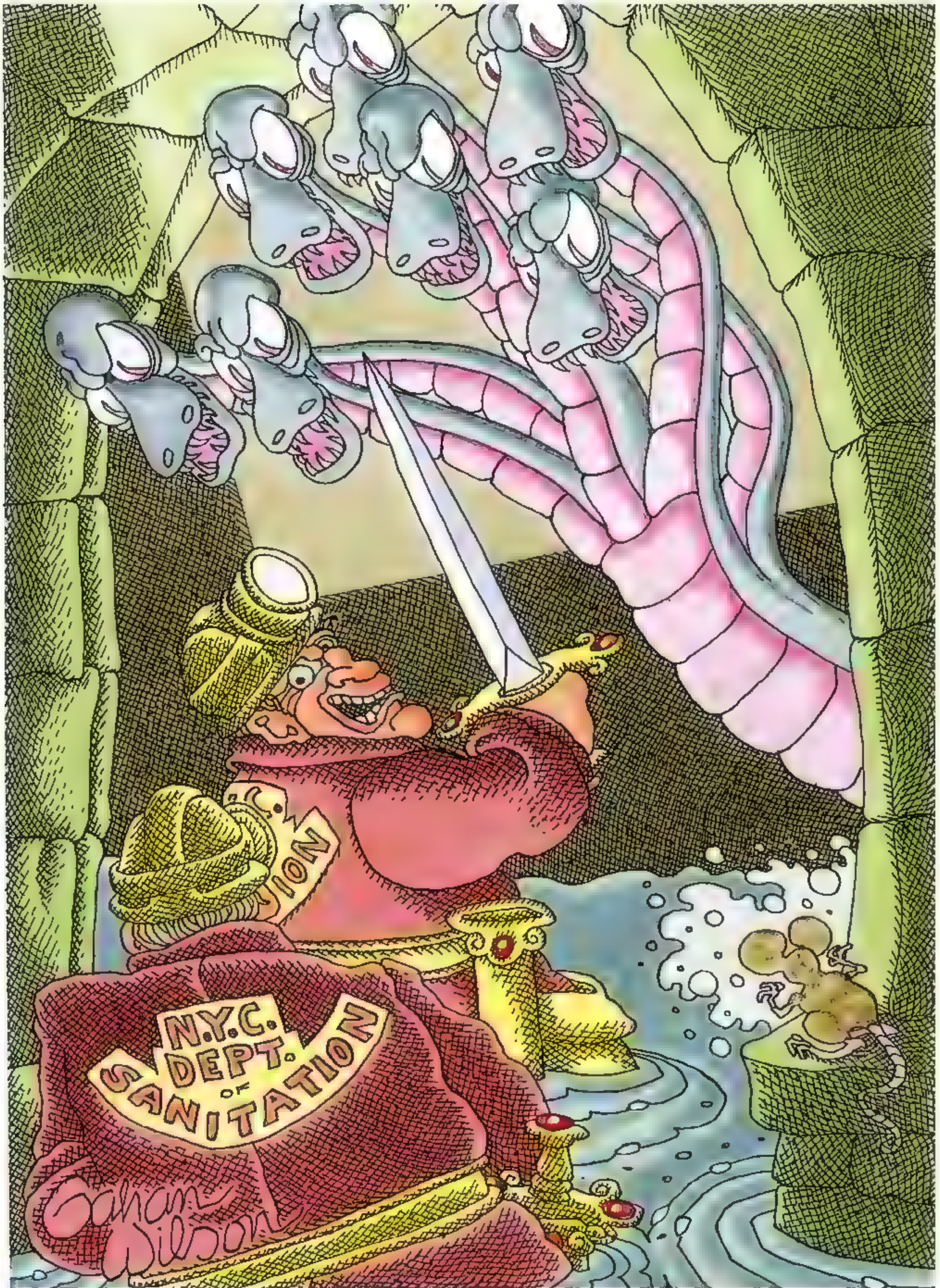
"I USED TO MAKE
JOKE'S ABOUT THE
END OF THE
WORLD BEFORE
THERE WAS AN
END TO
THE WORLD!"



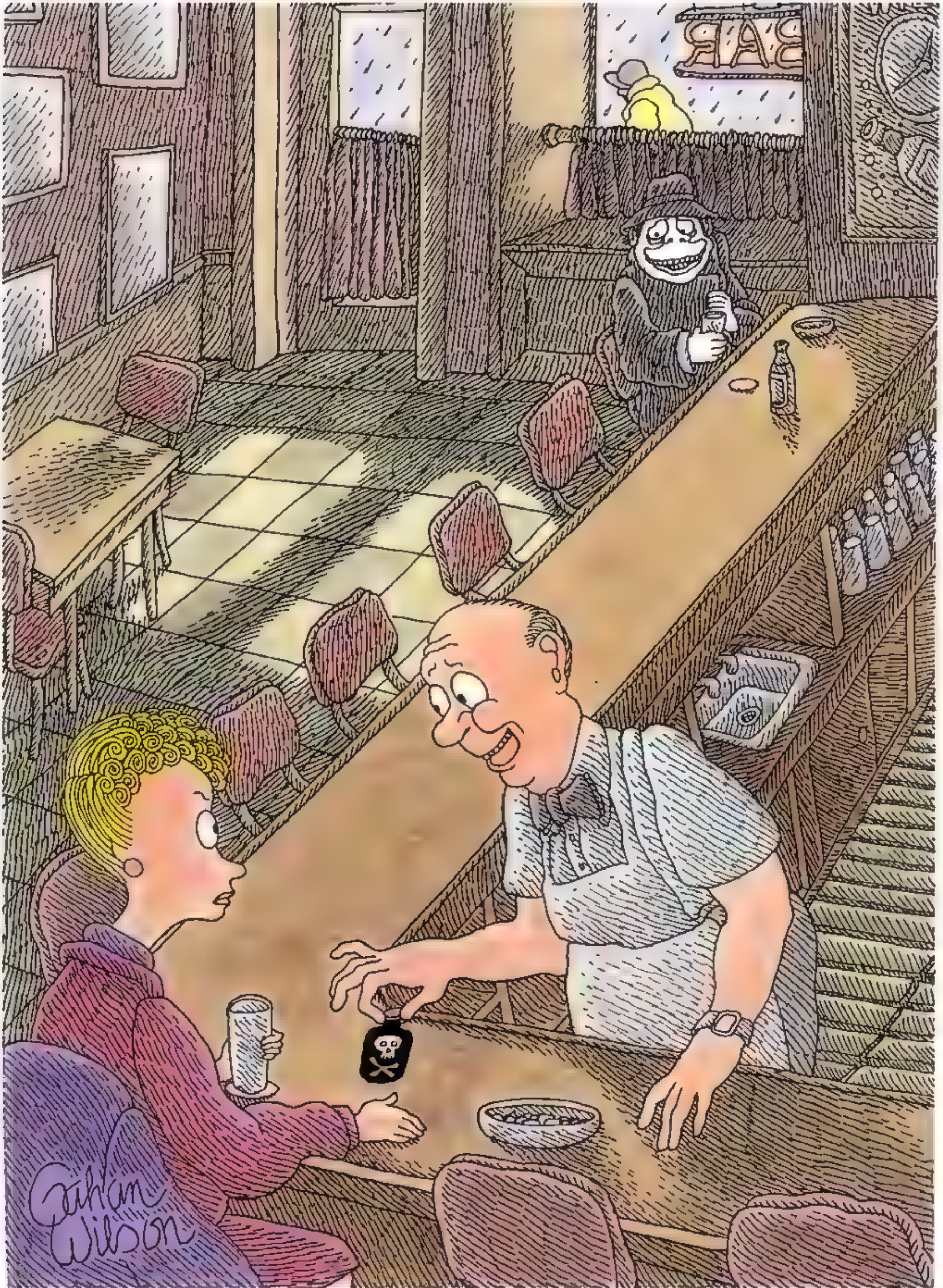
2. A. K



"Miss Petrie dines here with Mister Burton every Wednesday evening as a condition of Mister Burton's will."



"This is what the city pays us for, DiAngelo!"



"It's courtesy of the gentleman seated at the other end of the bar, ma'am."



"Why do you suppose it's only the kids who spot us?"



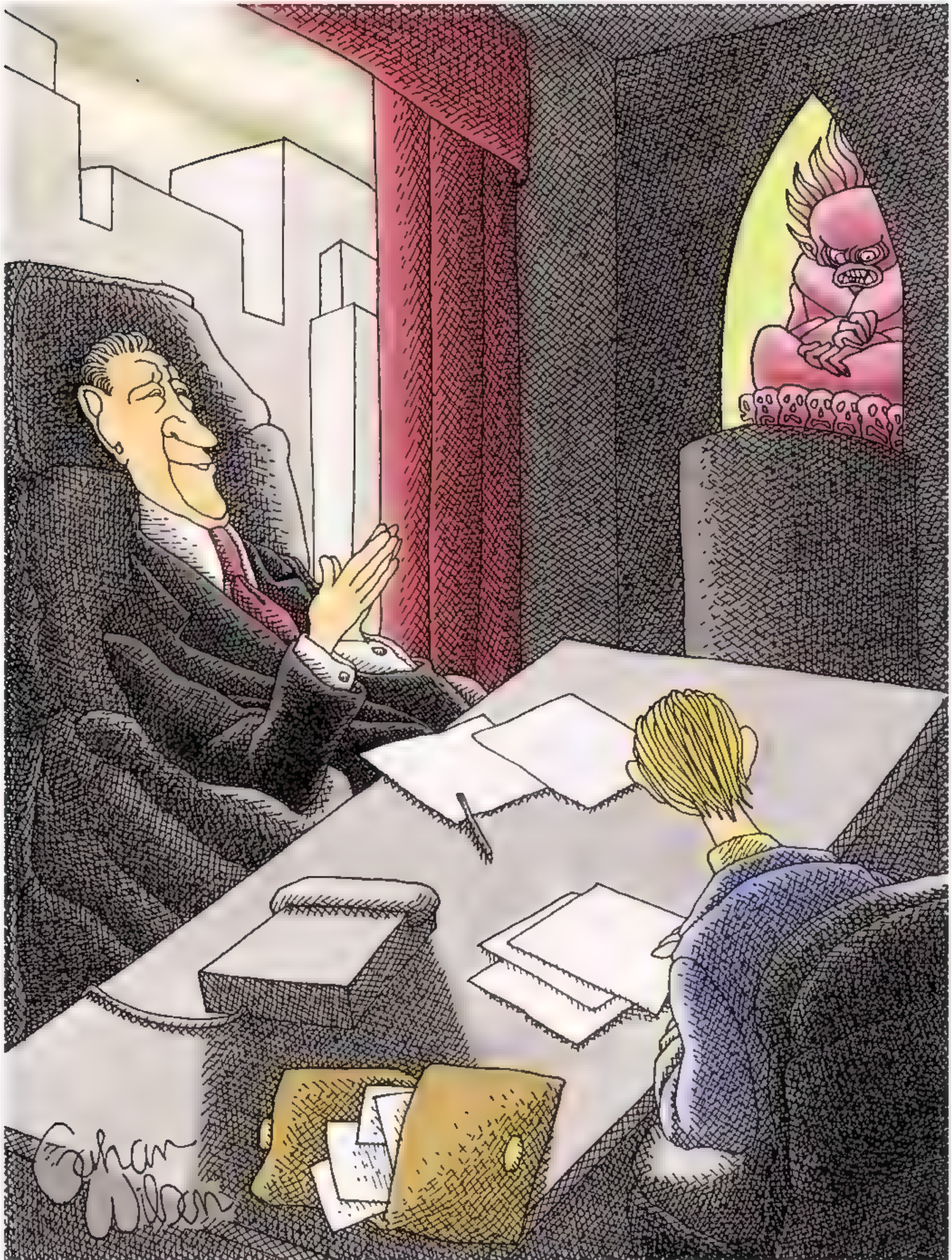
"You're very welcome."



"Dear, I think I've found the perfect place for your den!"



"Ignore that, Mrs. Schmidt, it's the oldest trick in their book!"



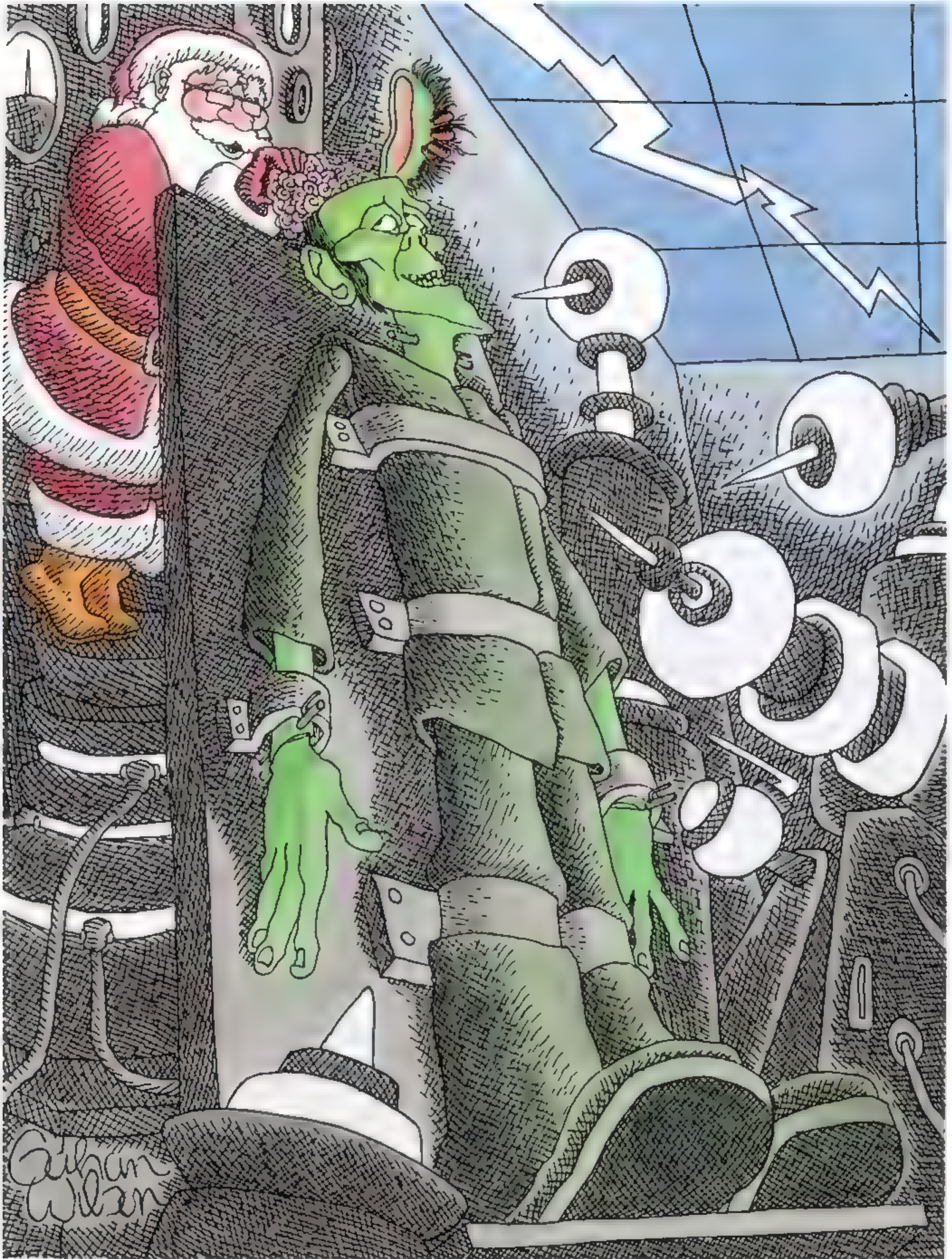
"Now and then I offer it a small sacrifice such as yourself."



"I knew we'd get you sooner or later, Van Helsing!"

Gahan
Wilson

*"Of course, if you don't want to buy the vacuum cleaner,
there's always the other option."*



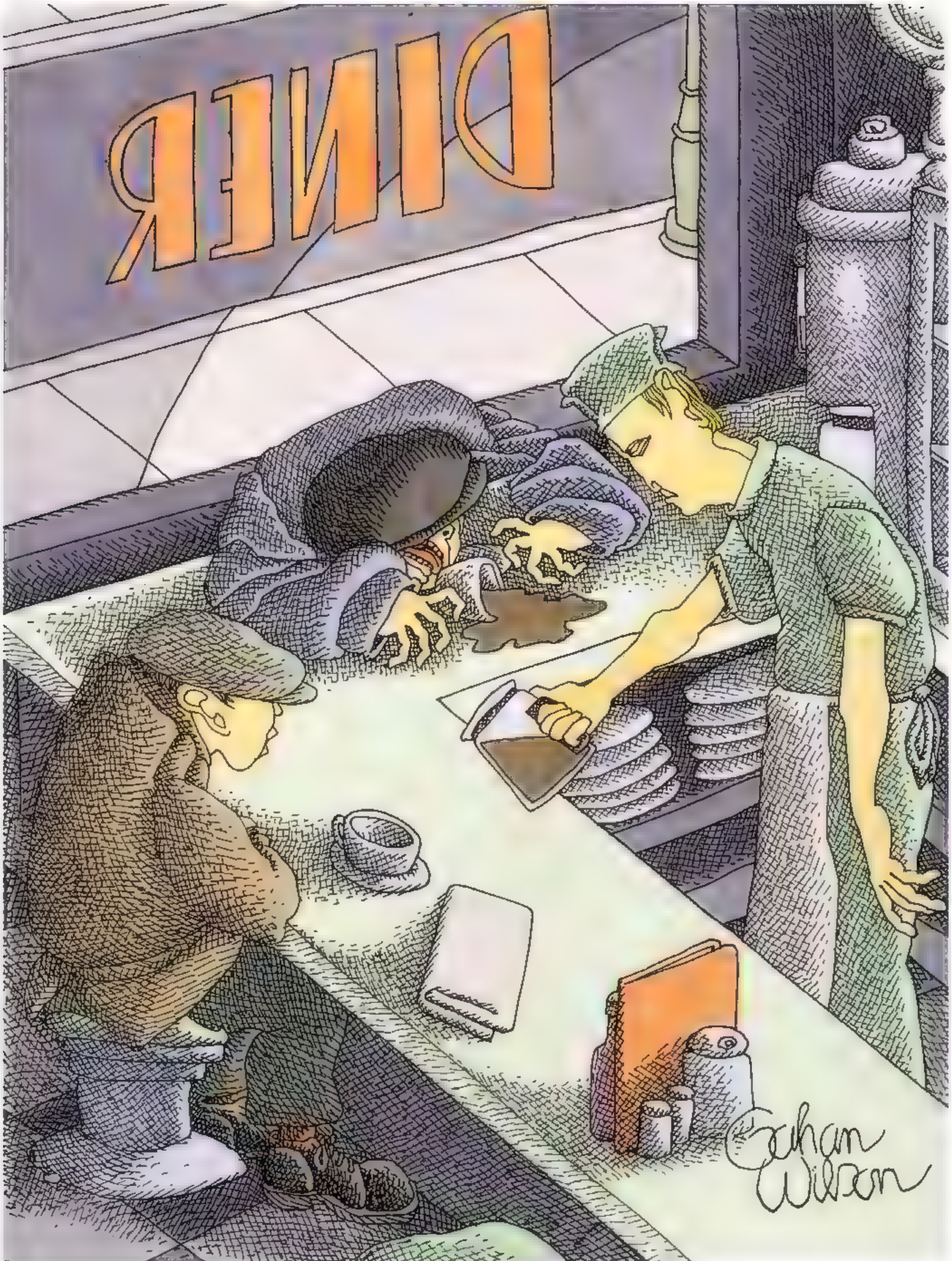
*"I thought you might like to have a merrier brain
for the new millennium!"*



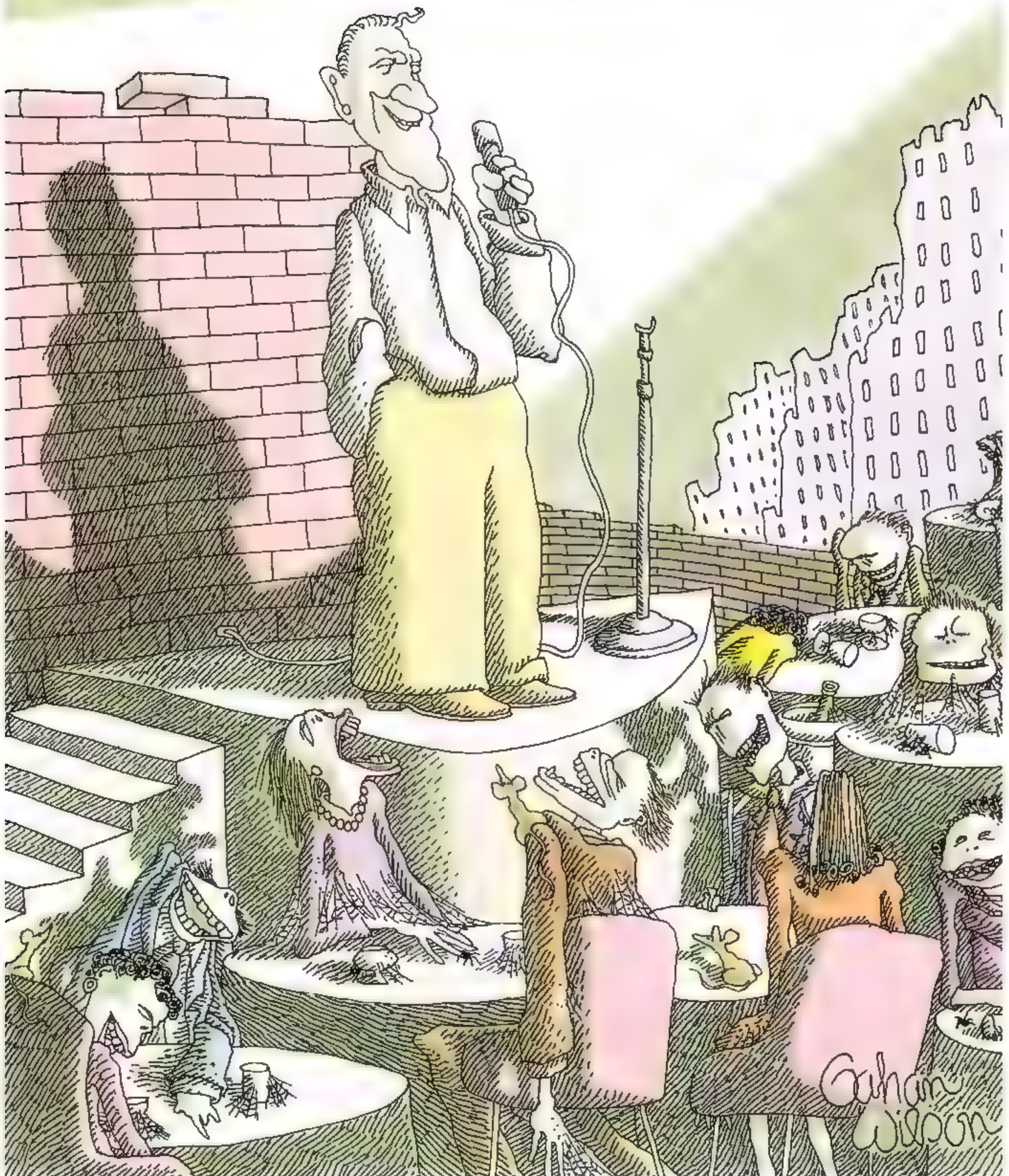
"This time I'm sure I've got it right!"



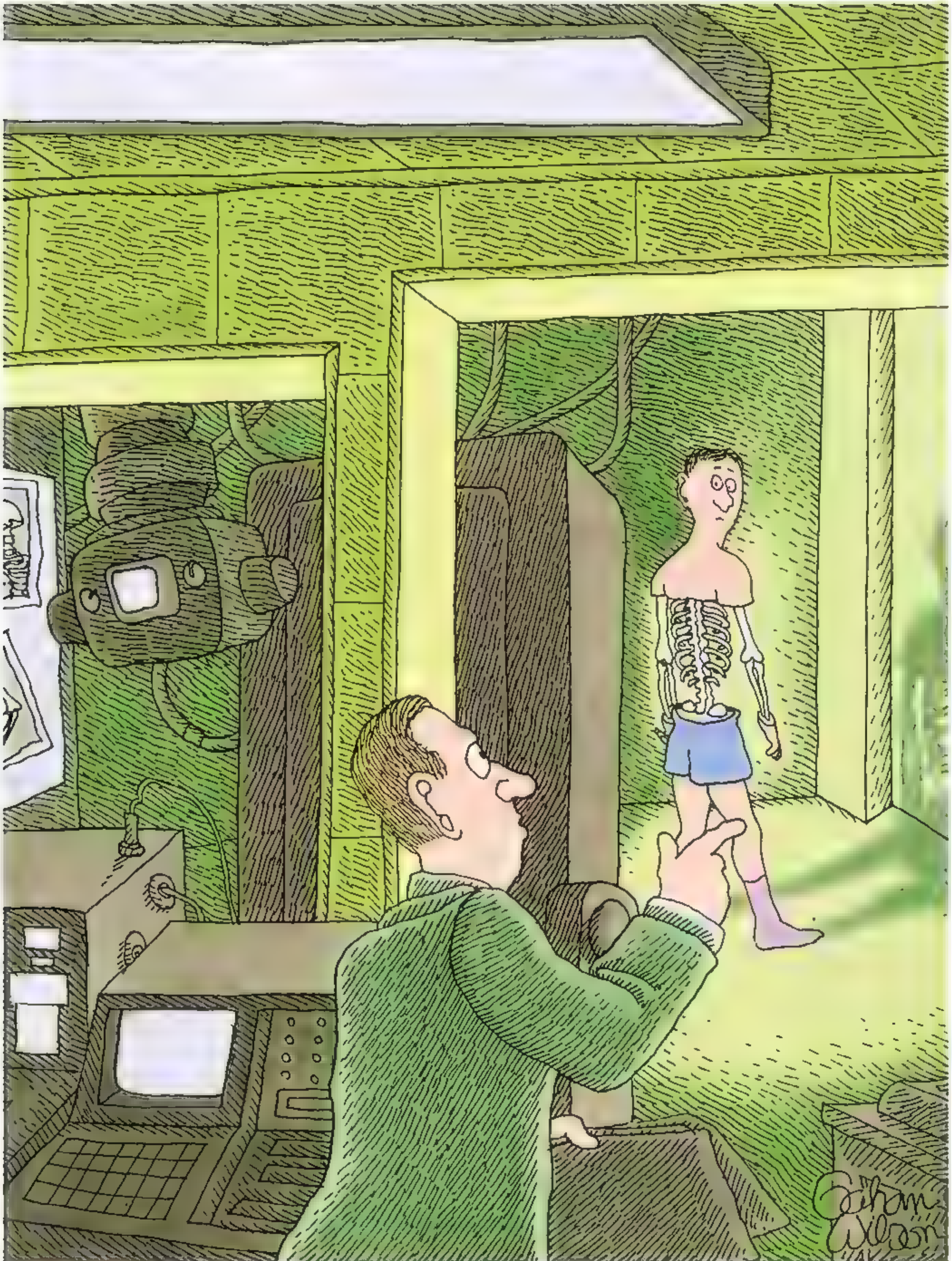
"I think that's the last of them!"



"I believe I'll pass on the coffee."



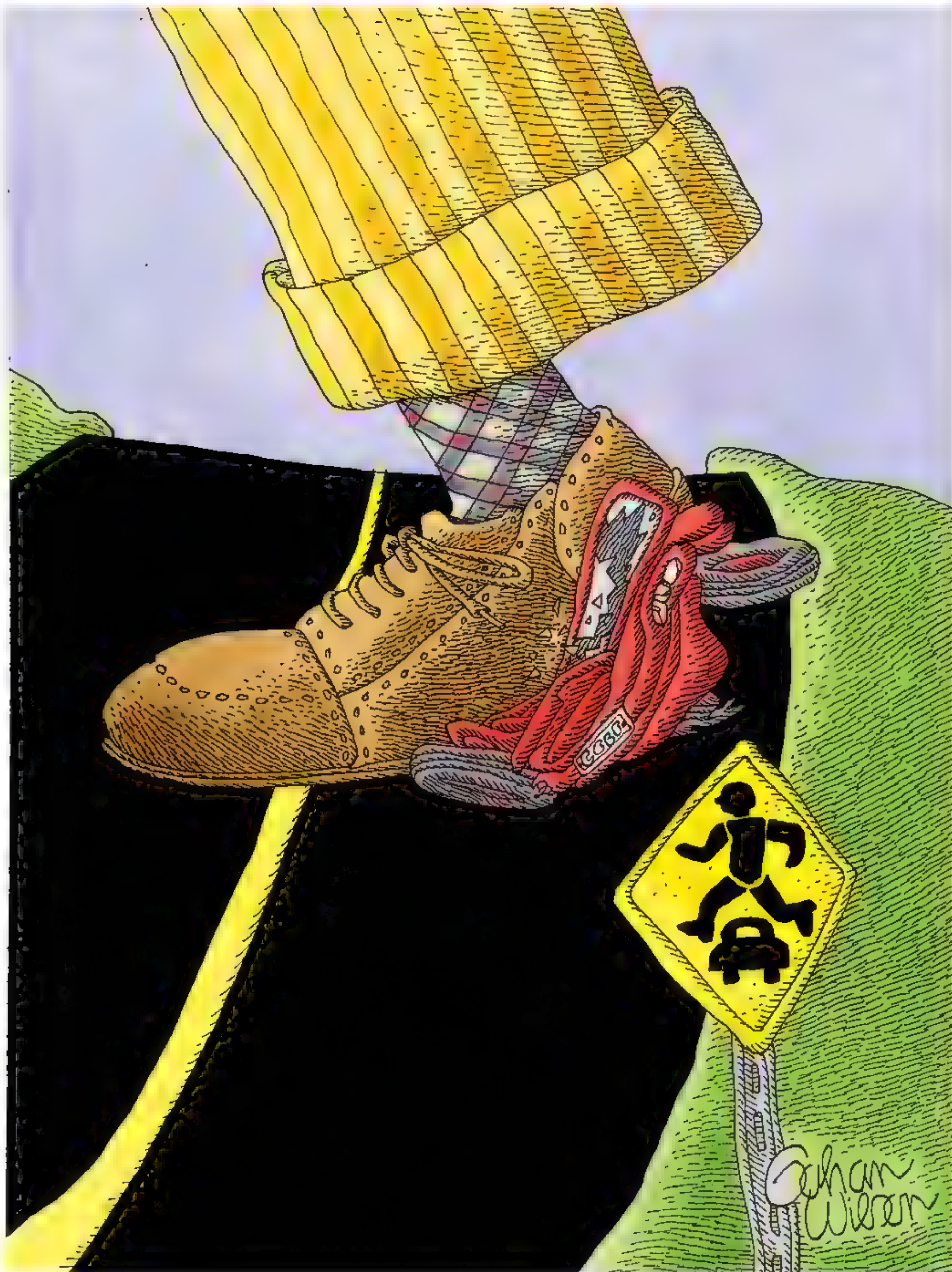
"I've been in show business so long I used to make jokes about the end of the world before there was an end to the world!"



*"Would you please step back to the machine
while I make an adjustment?"*



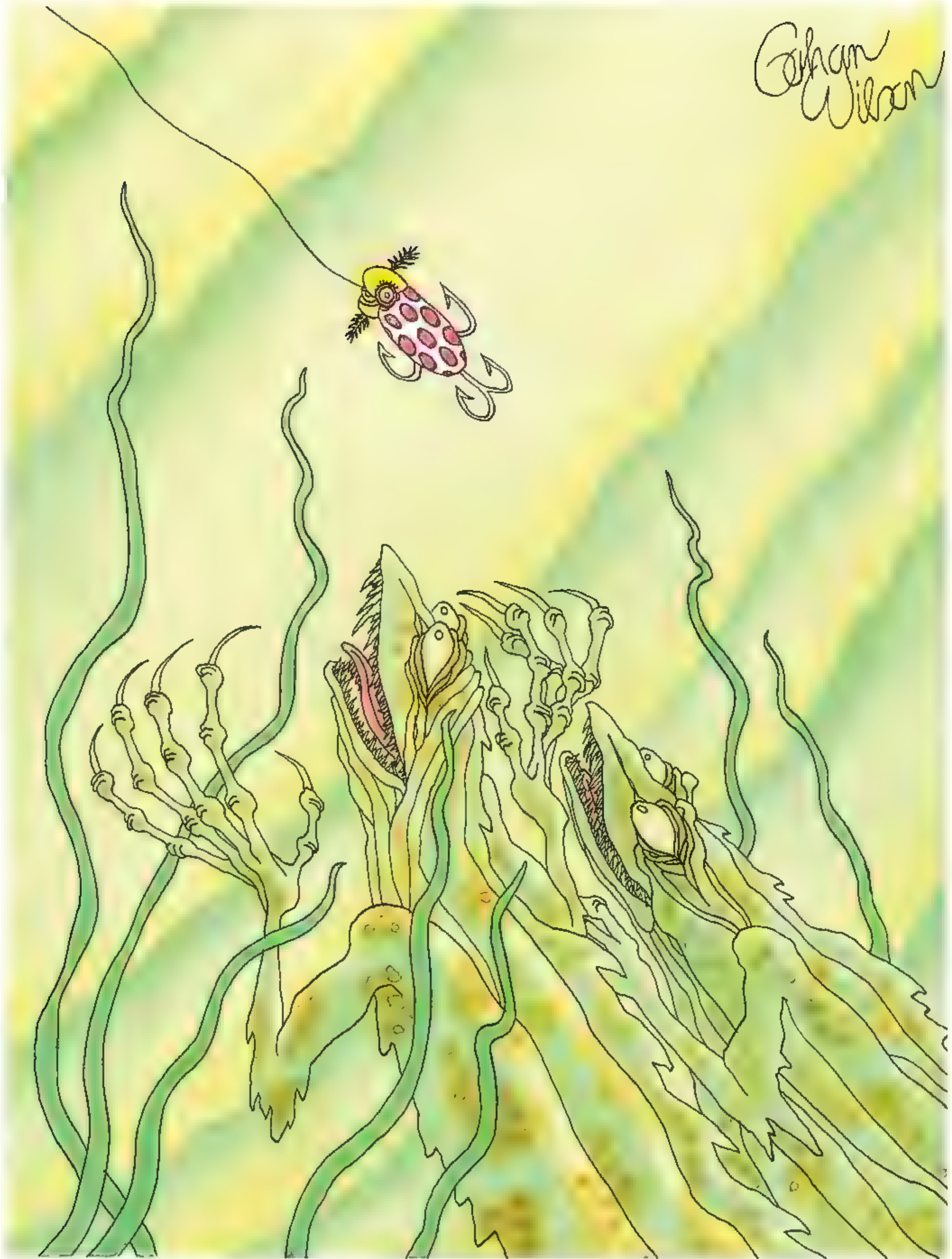
*"Gentlemen, third parties are ordinarily a long shot—
but not with clones of these guys!"*



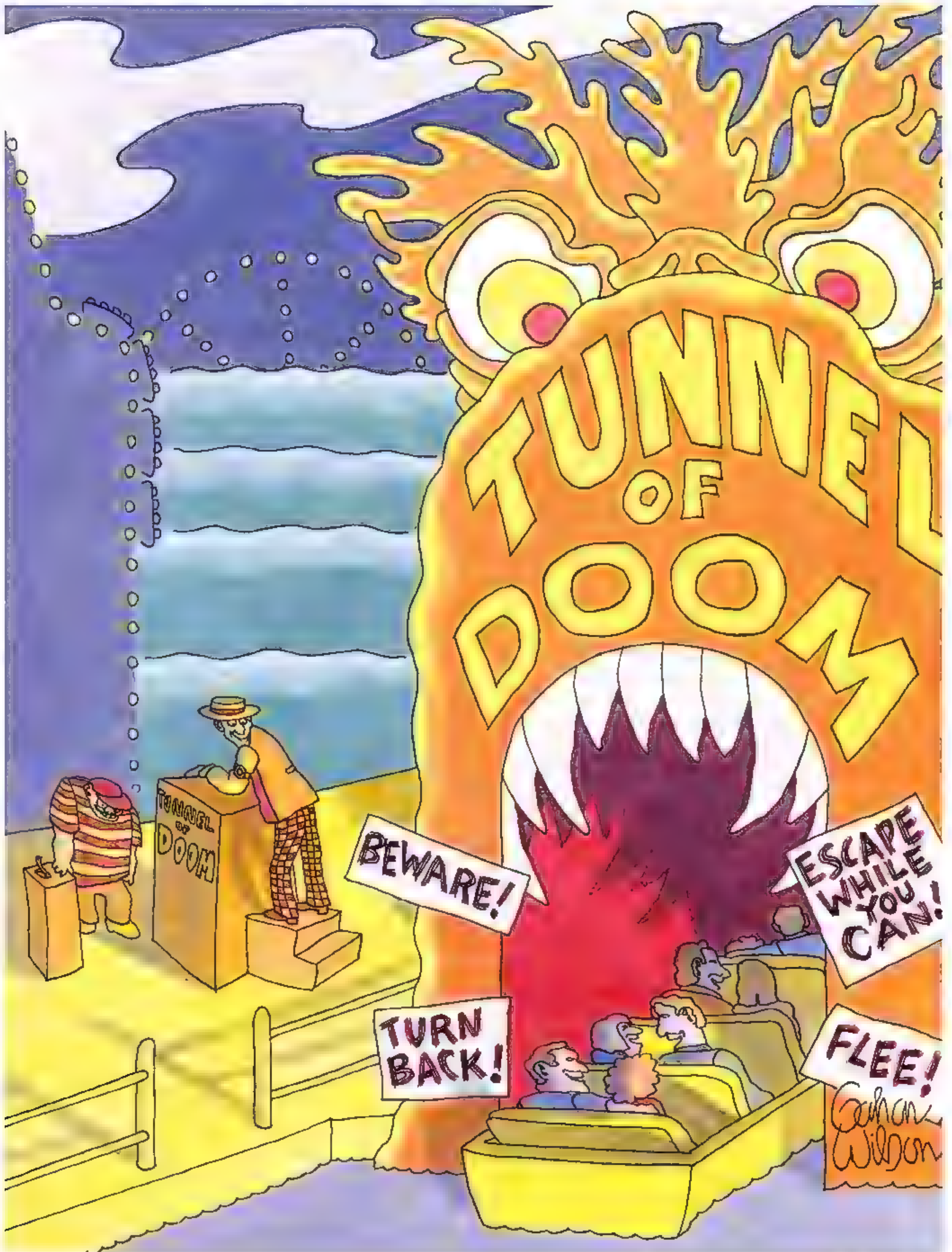


"What say we form a chat room on the web?"

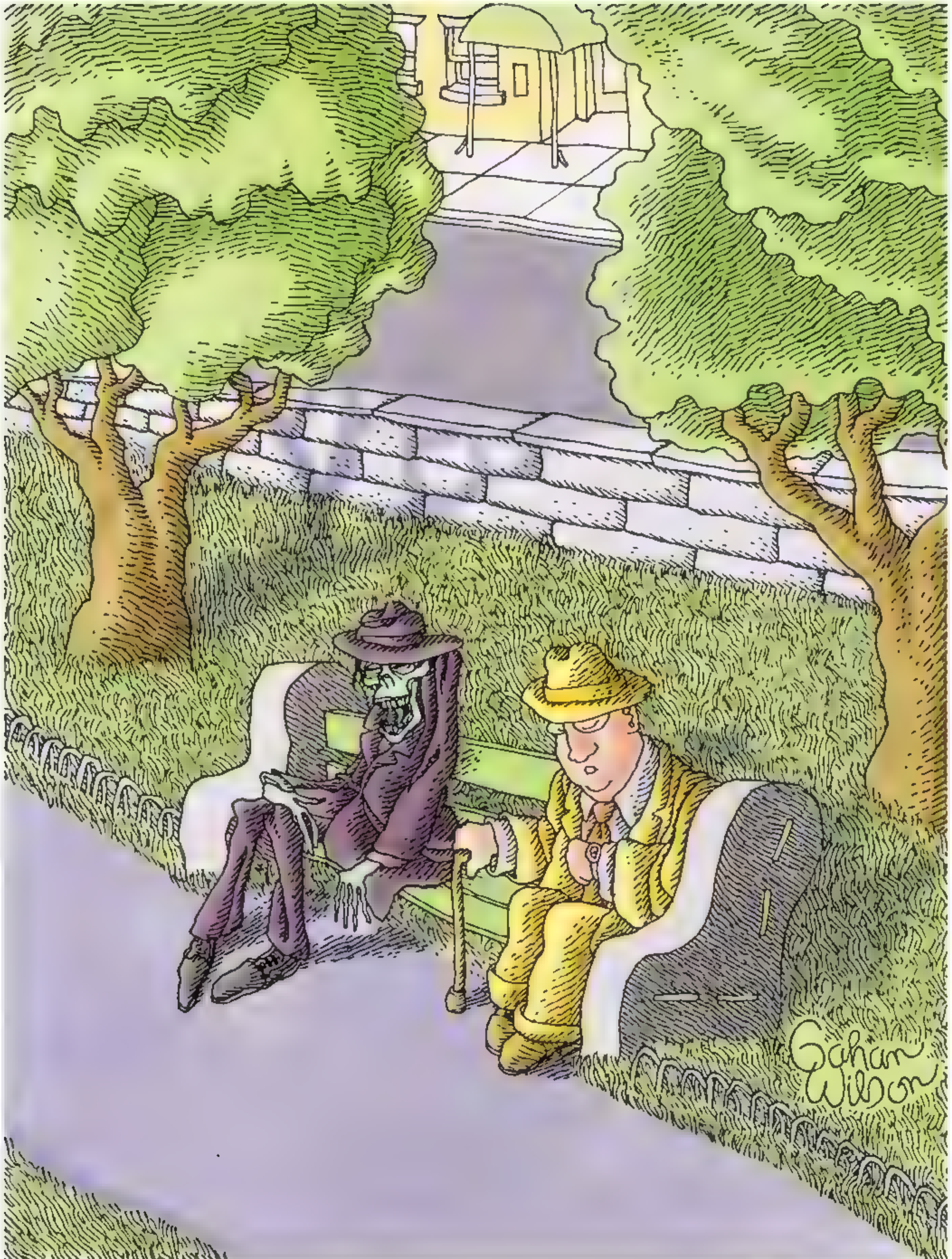
Graham Wilson



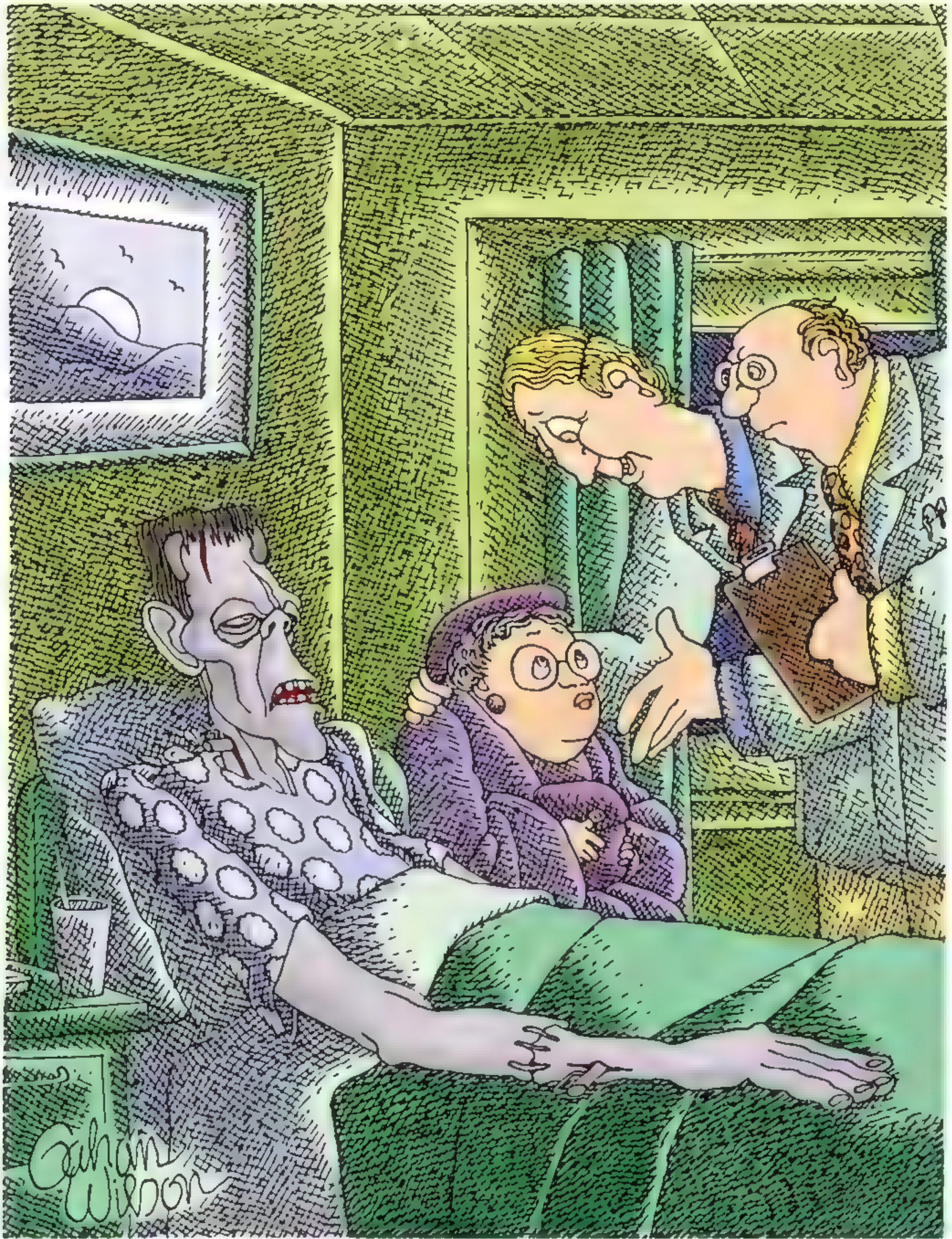
"If we follow that line to its other end we'll find something tasty!"



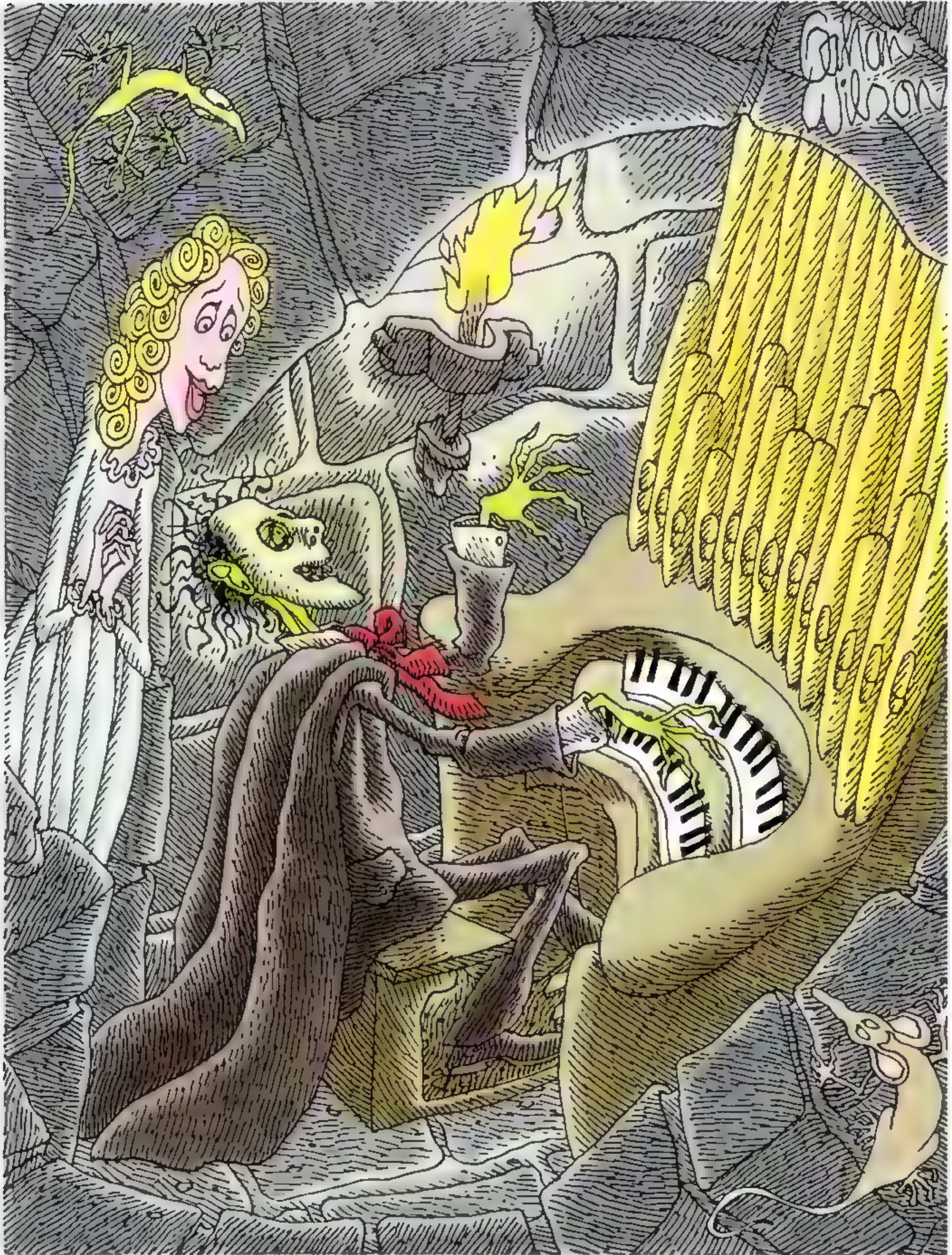
"Look—you can't say we don't give them fair warning!"



"Time for me to take off, but I'll be here tomorrow as usual."



"The staff of this hospital would like to assure you, Mrs. Smith, that the brain of Mr. Smith ending up in Frankenstein's monster was entirely unintentional."



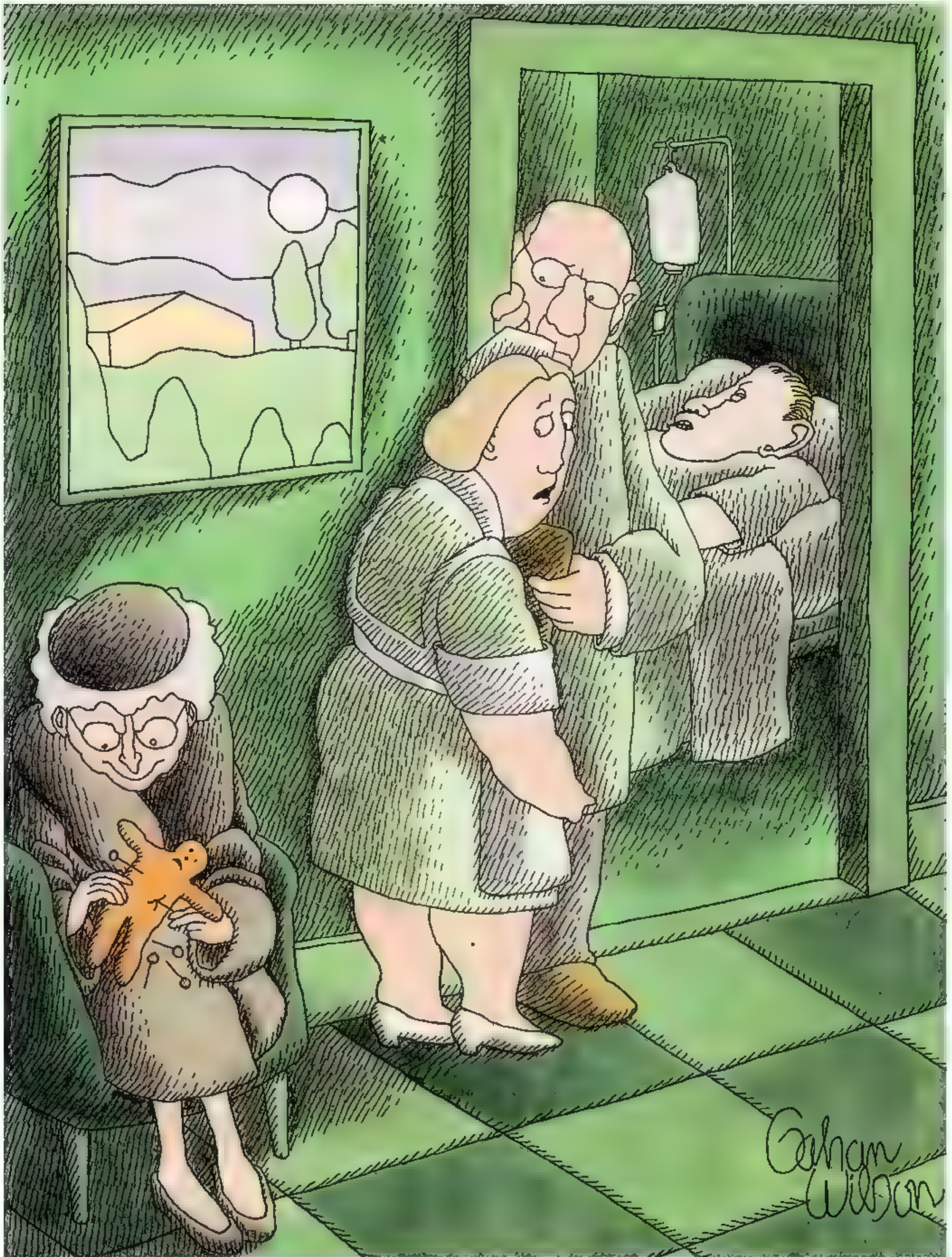
"I just love it when you get off on Cole Porter!"



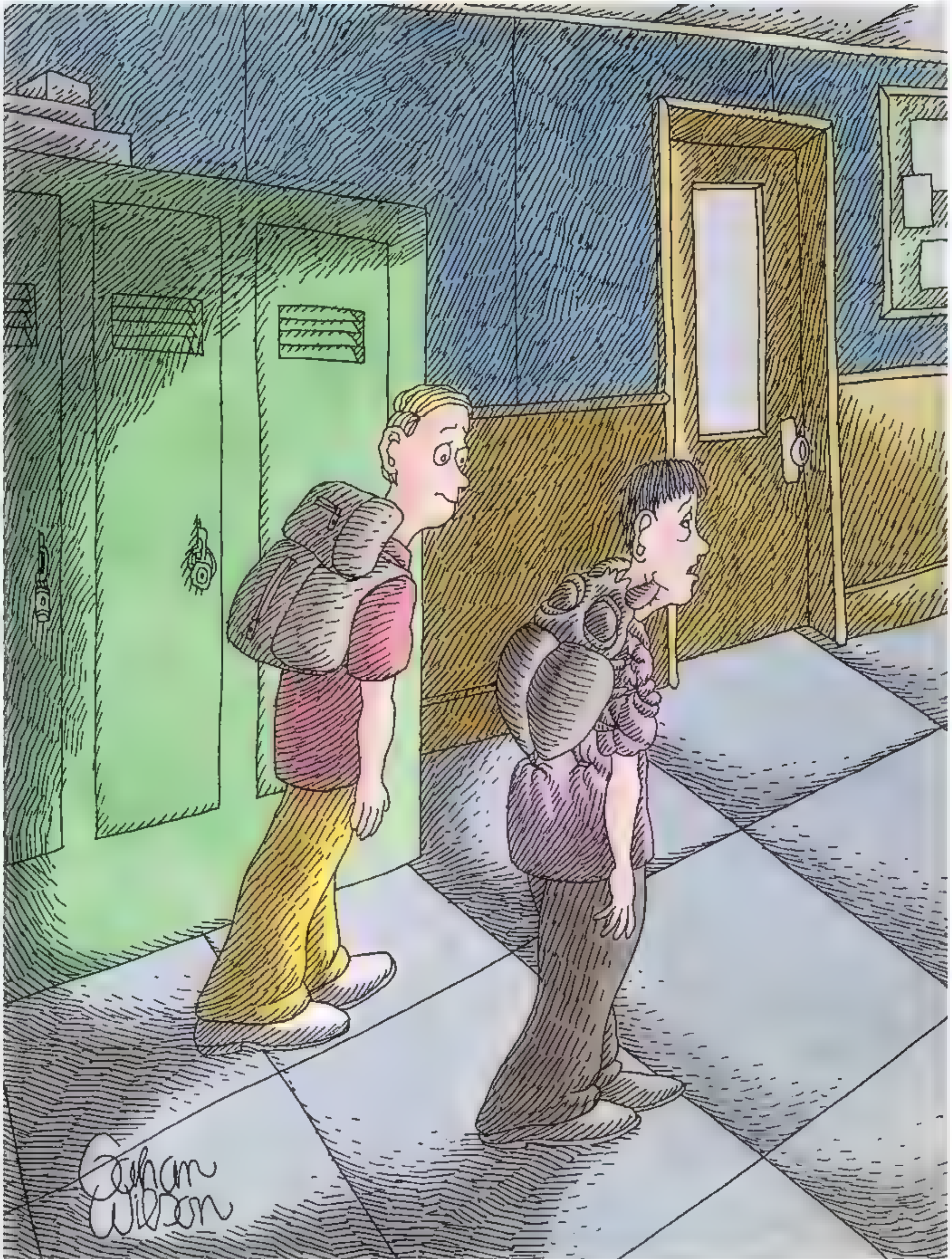
"Oh, very well—but don't wake your father or me and be sure to share everything you get with your little sister!"



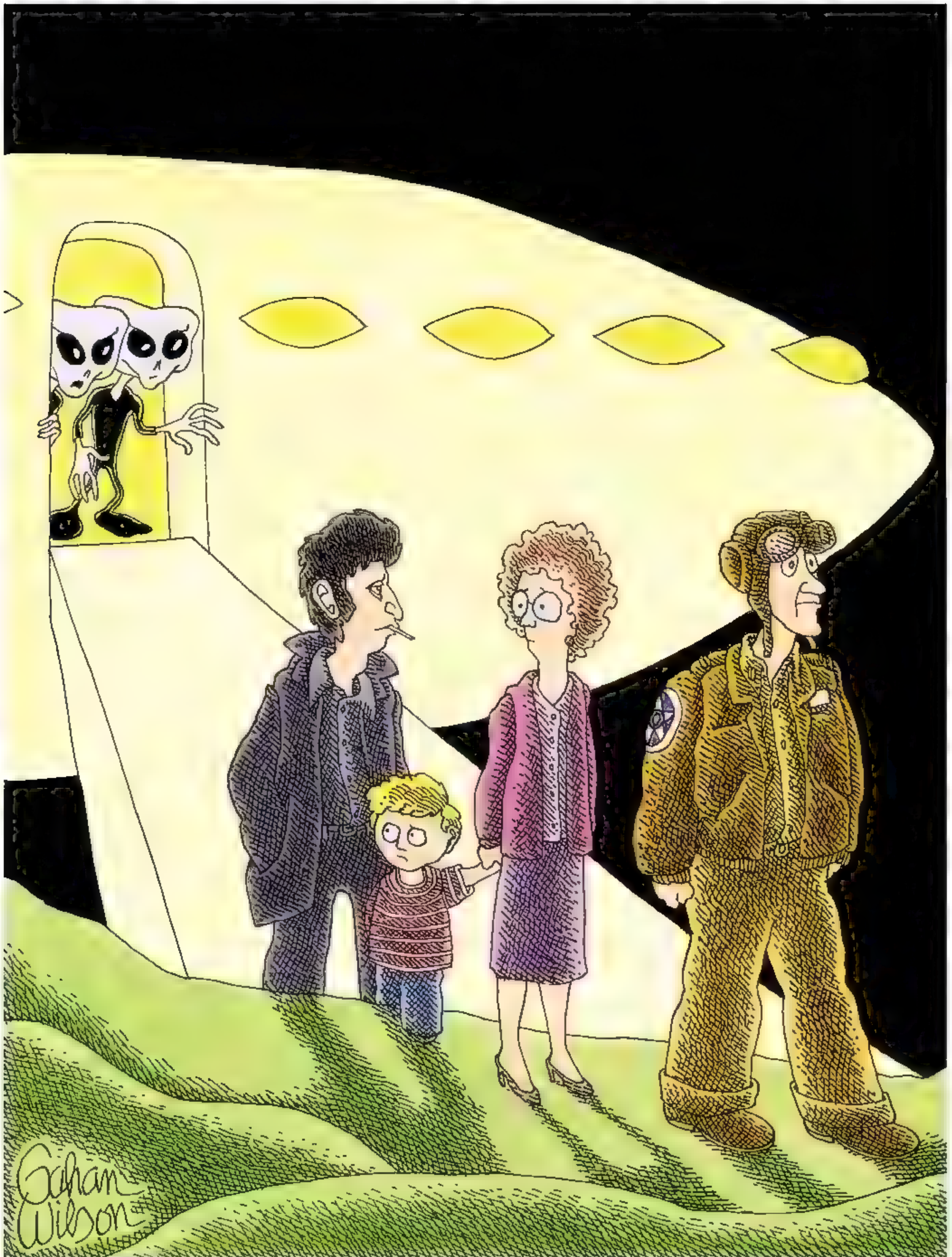
"I'm delighted to let my beloved brother pass out presents to the good little boys and girls, so long as I can take care of the rest!"



"I think I may have found the problem!"



"It's not a backpack."



*"Sometimes they readjust when we release them,
sometimes they don't."*



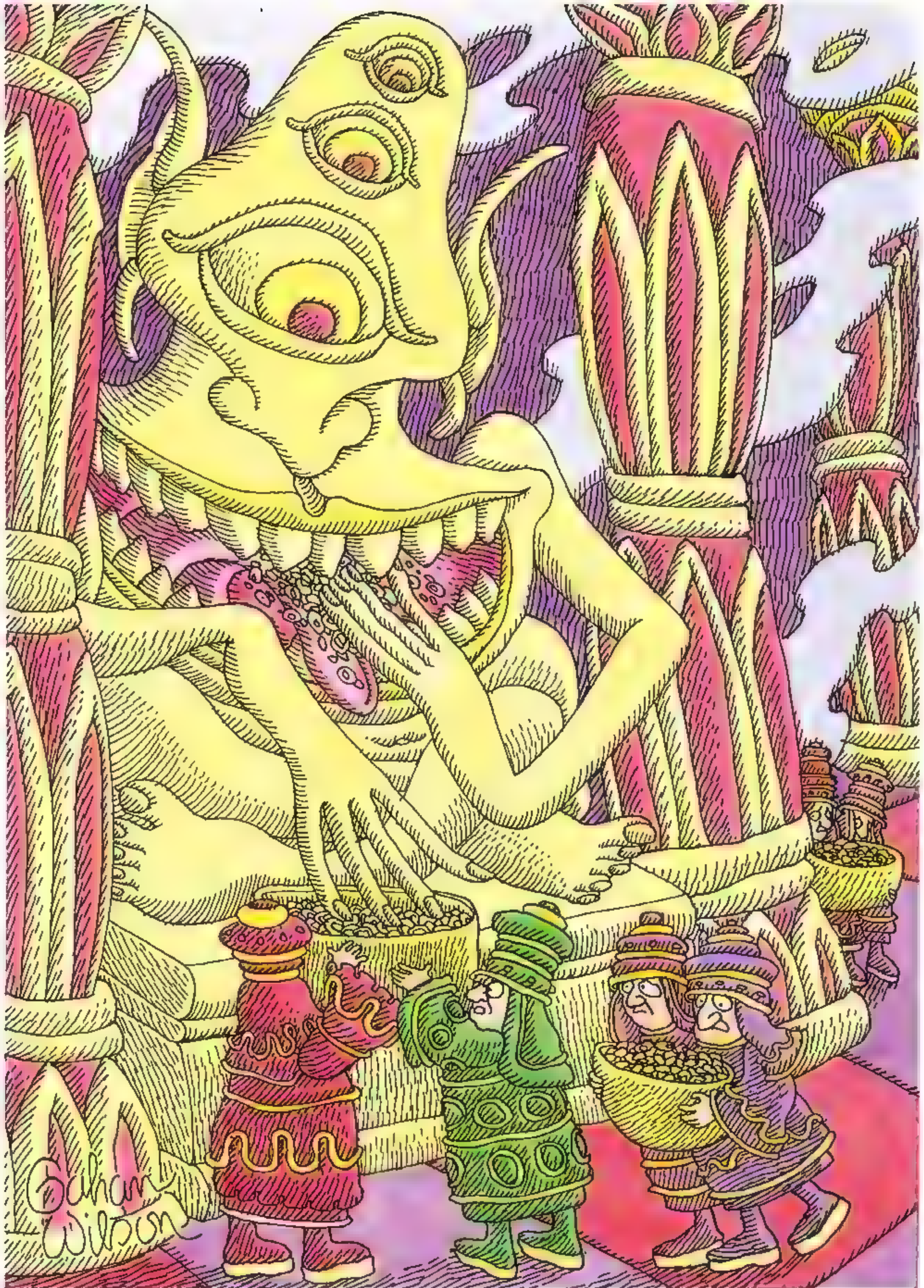
*"I'm well aware that being dead and buried has weakened
my position in the corporation."*



*"I hope you realize your late arrivals for work seriously
upset the museum's visitors!"*



"It doesn't have to end like this, Margaret!"



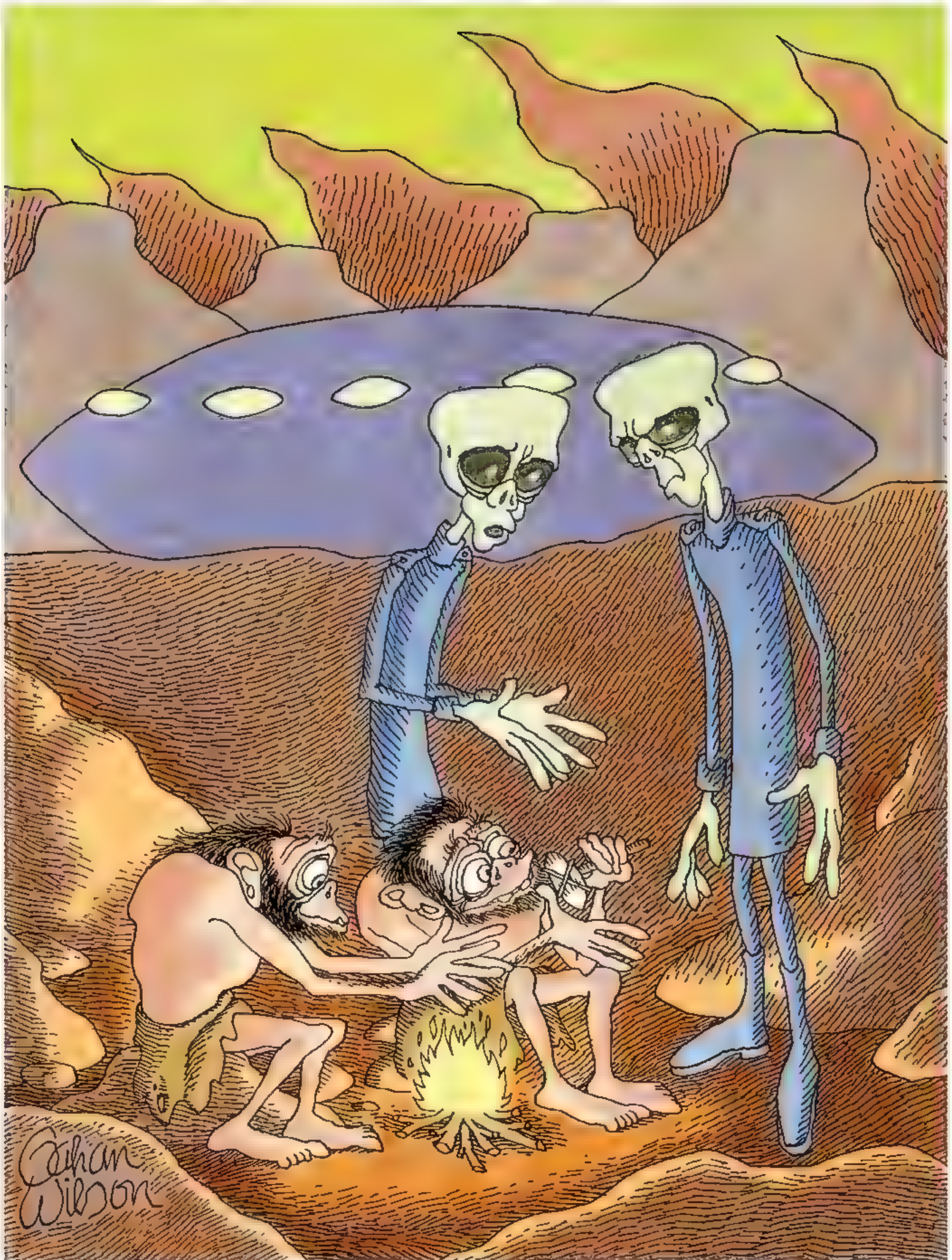
"We should never have started offering it potato chips!"



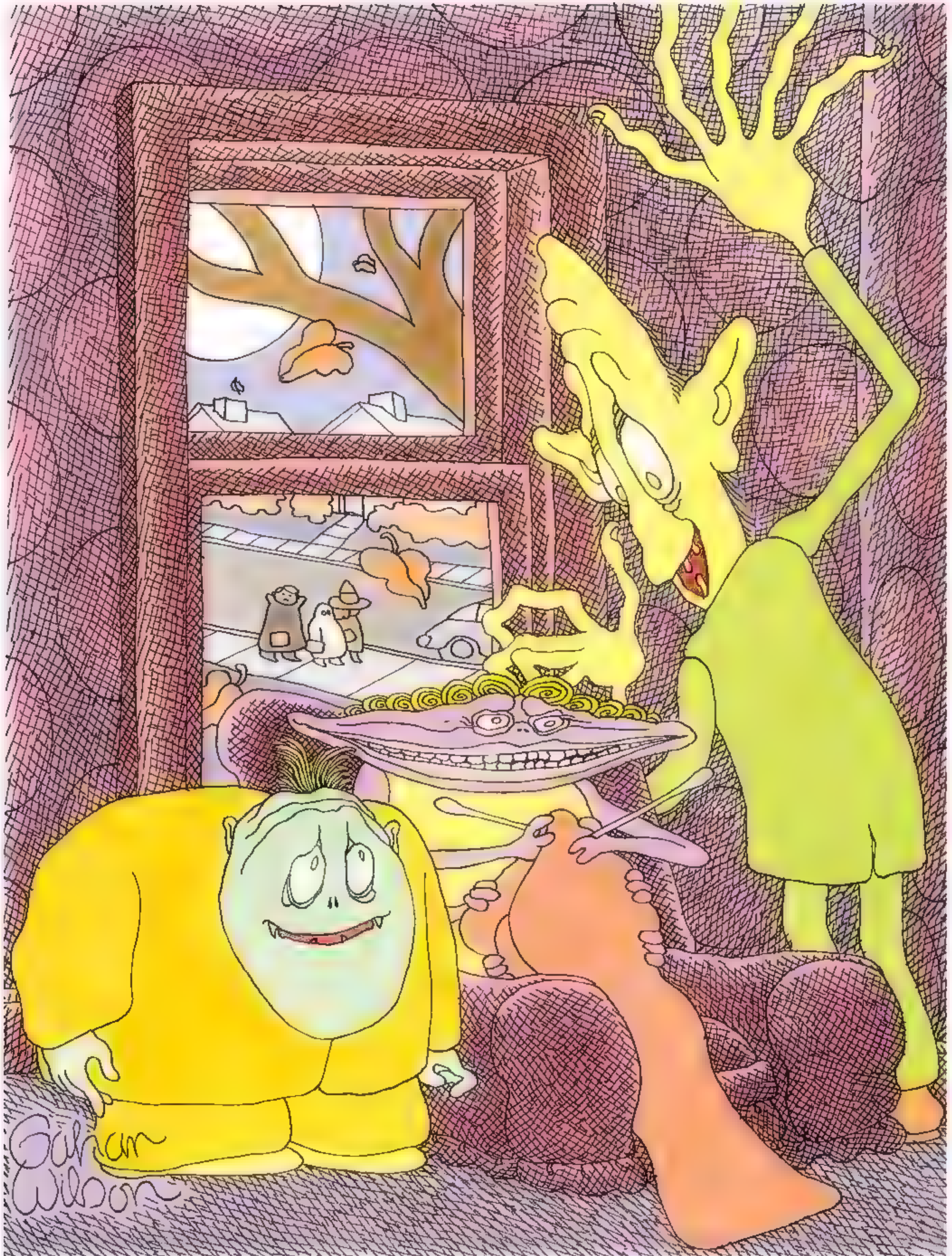
*"Sometimes it's hard to tell whether she's
going out or coming in!"*



"Some we keep, some we throw away."



"What possible harm can come to this planet from teaching these miserable creatures how to use fire and simple tools?"



*"What do you say—just this once—
we go out and trick or treat?"*



"Apparently, this curse has a lot more going for it than we figured."



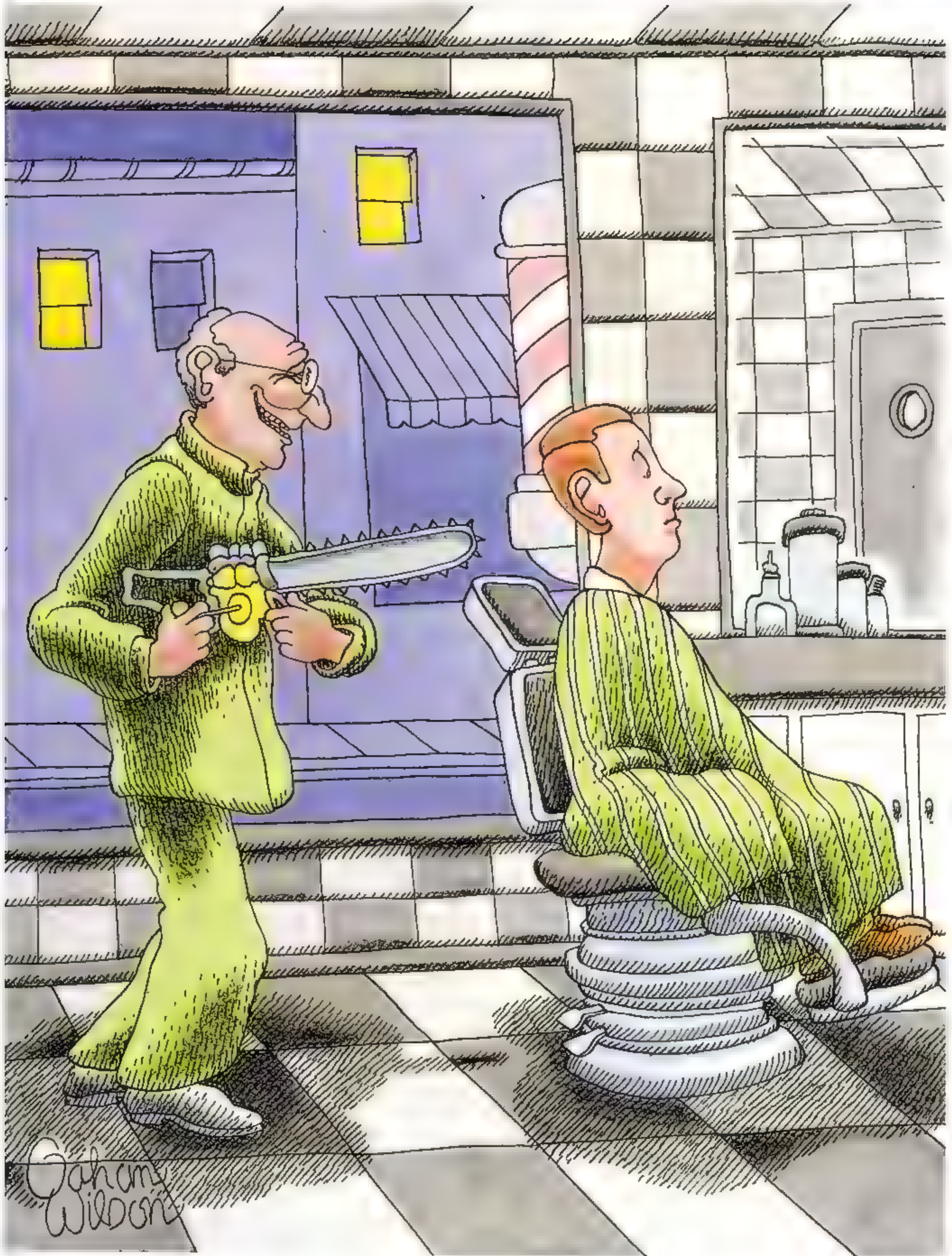
*Illustration for a story by Robert Coover titled
"The Invisible Man"*



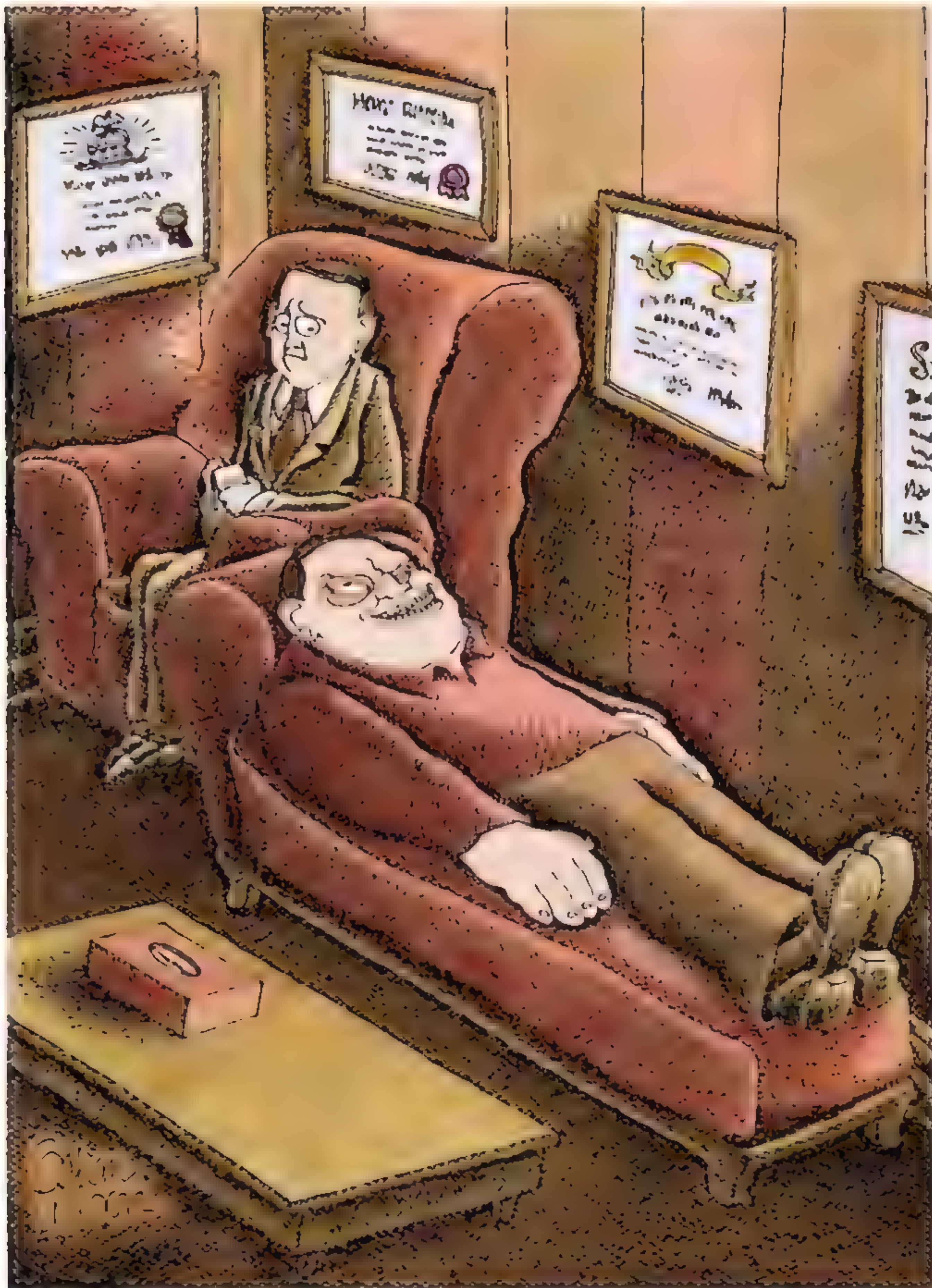
"Don't worry, sir—we've got all possible entrances covered!"



*"Of course, in those conservative Victorian days
I kept it hidden away in the attic."*



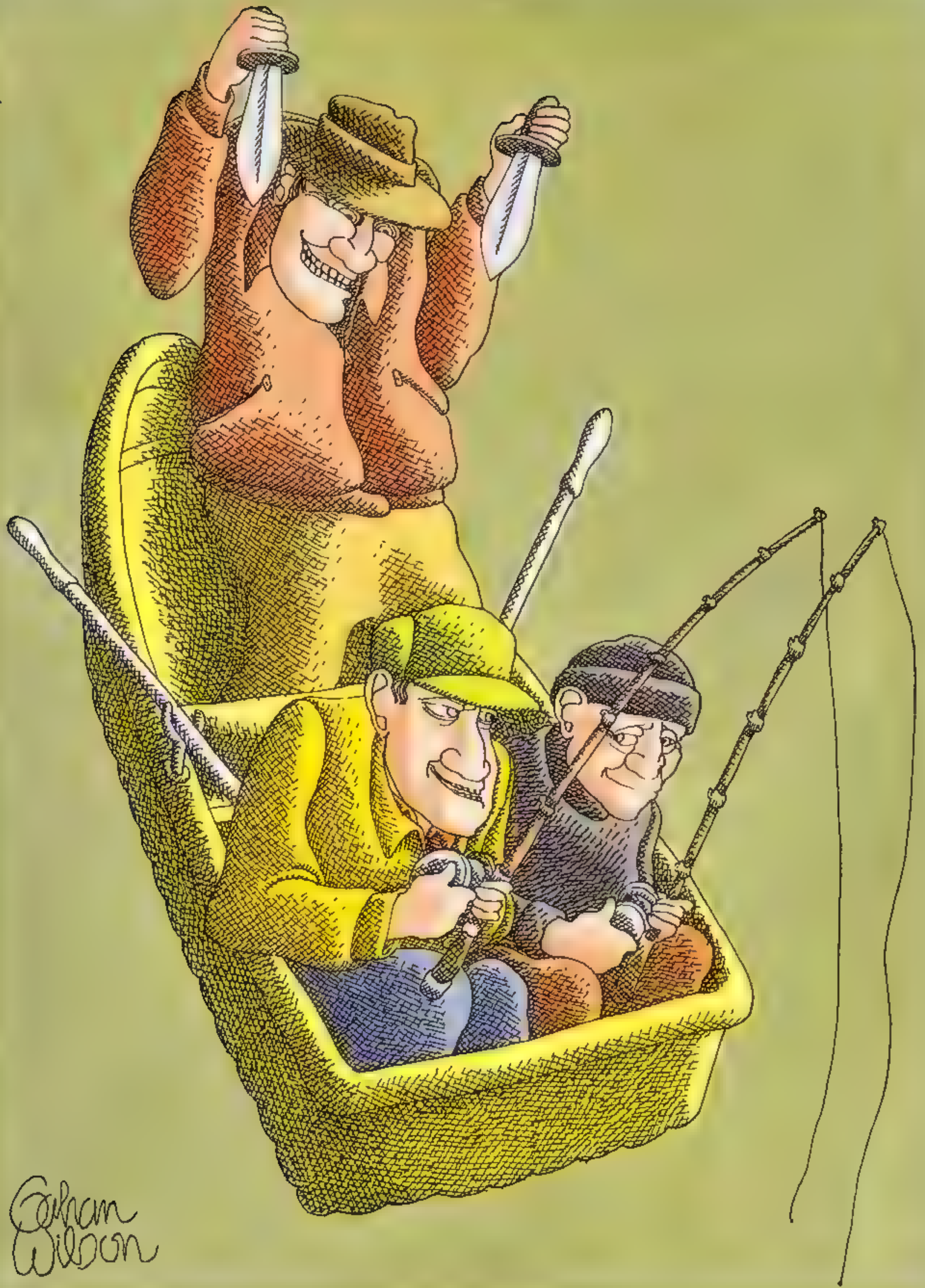
"Just one last touch!"



"So, do you think this Soprano guy will end up
uhacking his shrink or uhat?"



"Can't you do anything about this sunlight?"

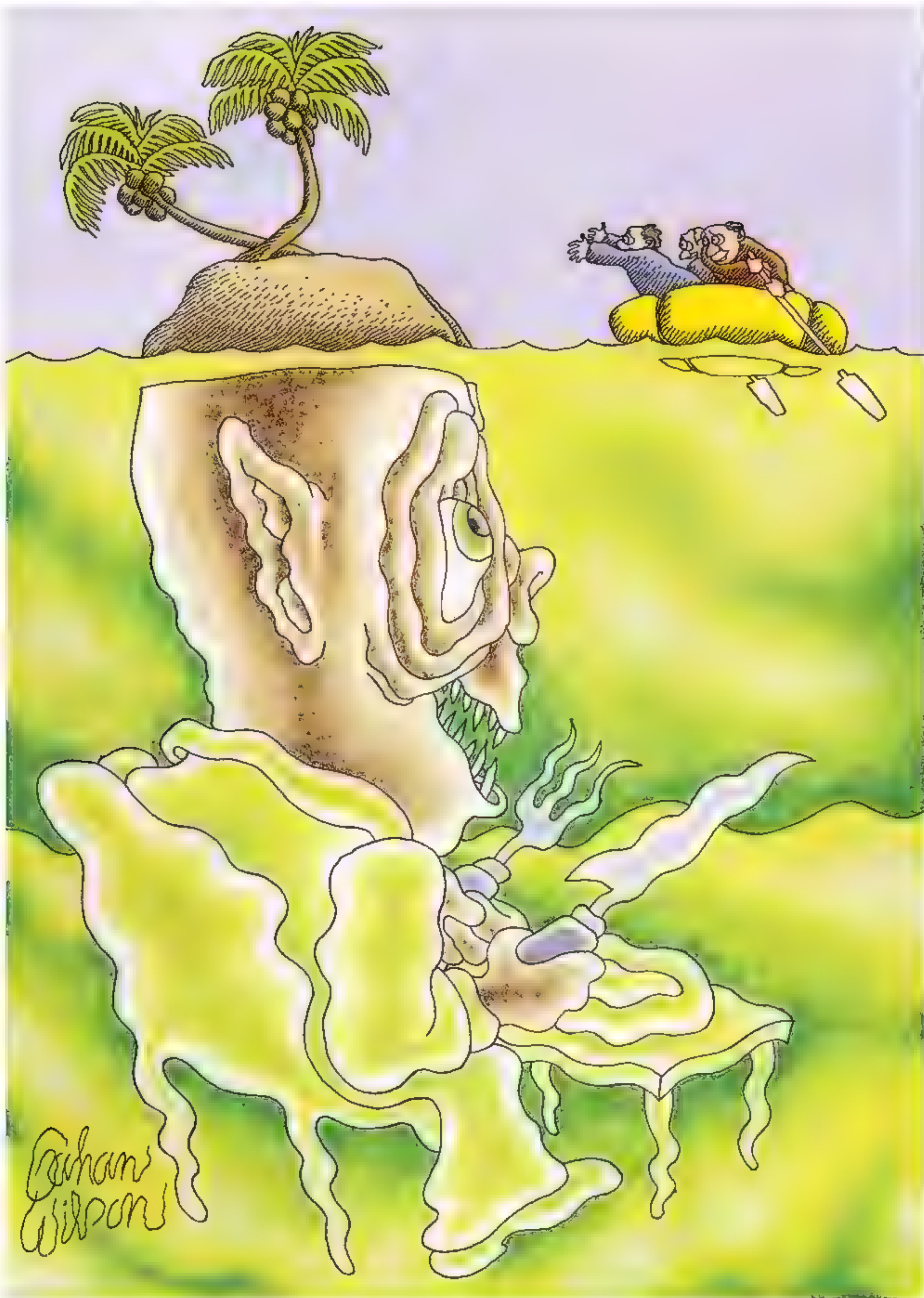


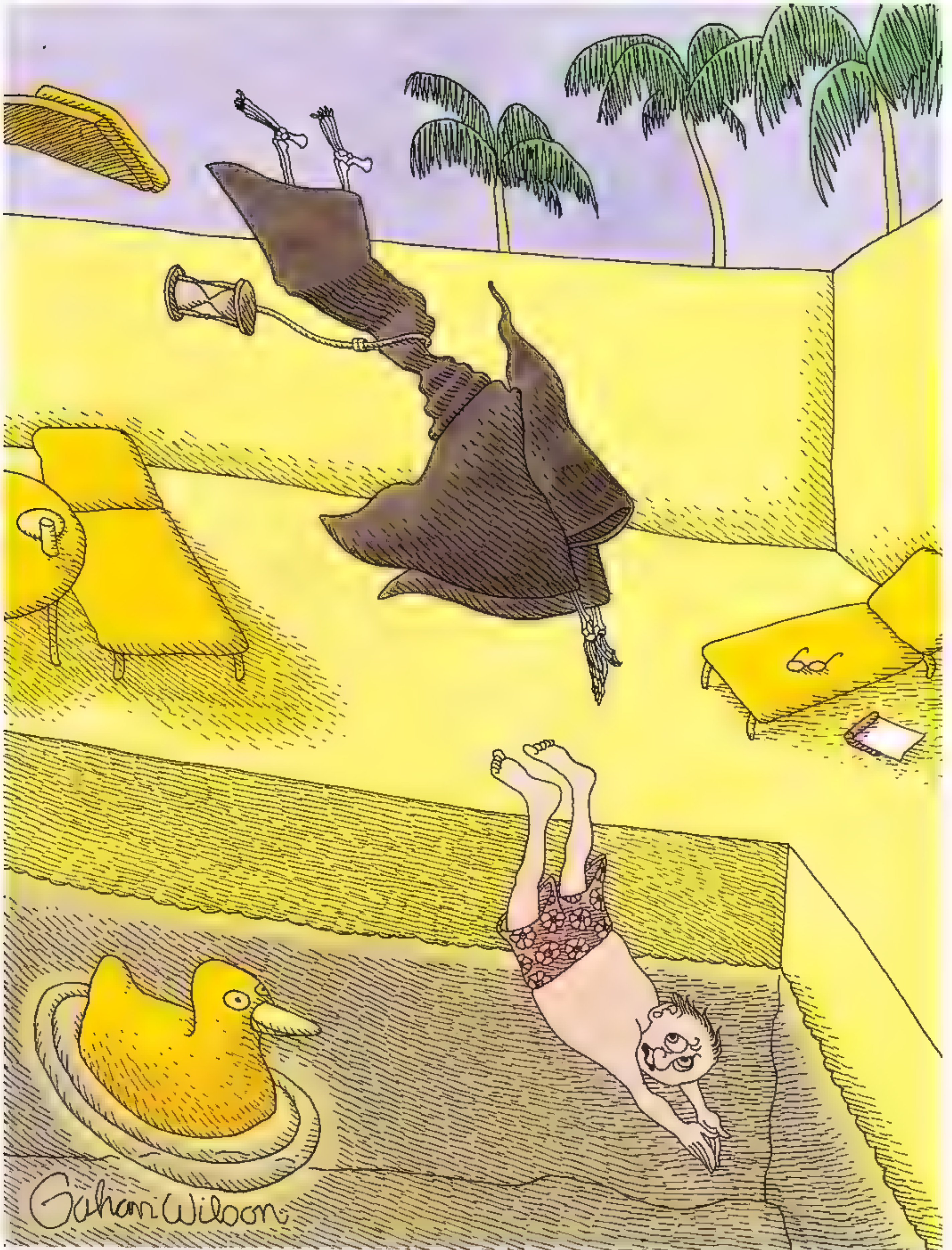
Graham
Wilson

*"Remember, one way or another, this time we find out what mystery
bait he's using for those record-breaking catches!"*



"It doesn't look good."







"The feeder is for George."



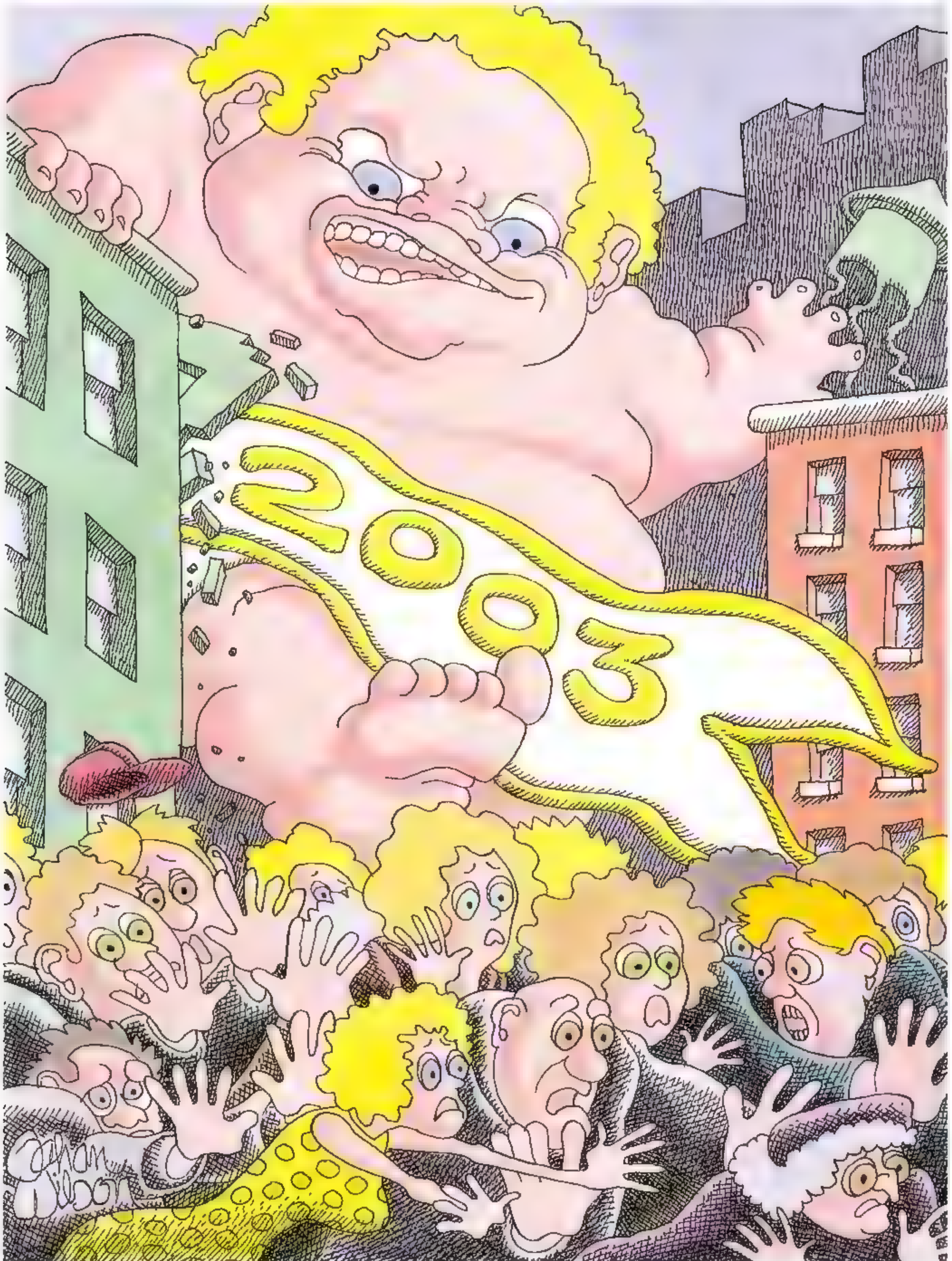
*"Didn't Mommy and Daddy tell you the other children would play
with you if you wore your Halloween costumes?!"*



"I think we really got hurt by the jury selection!"



"So this is why you hide up here at the North Pole all year!!"



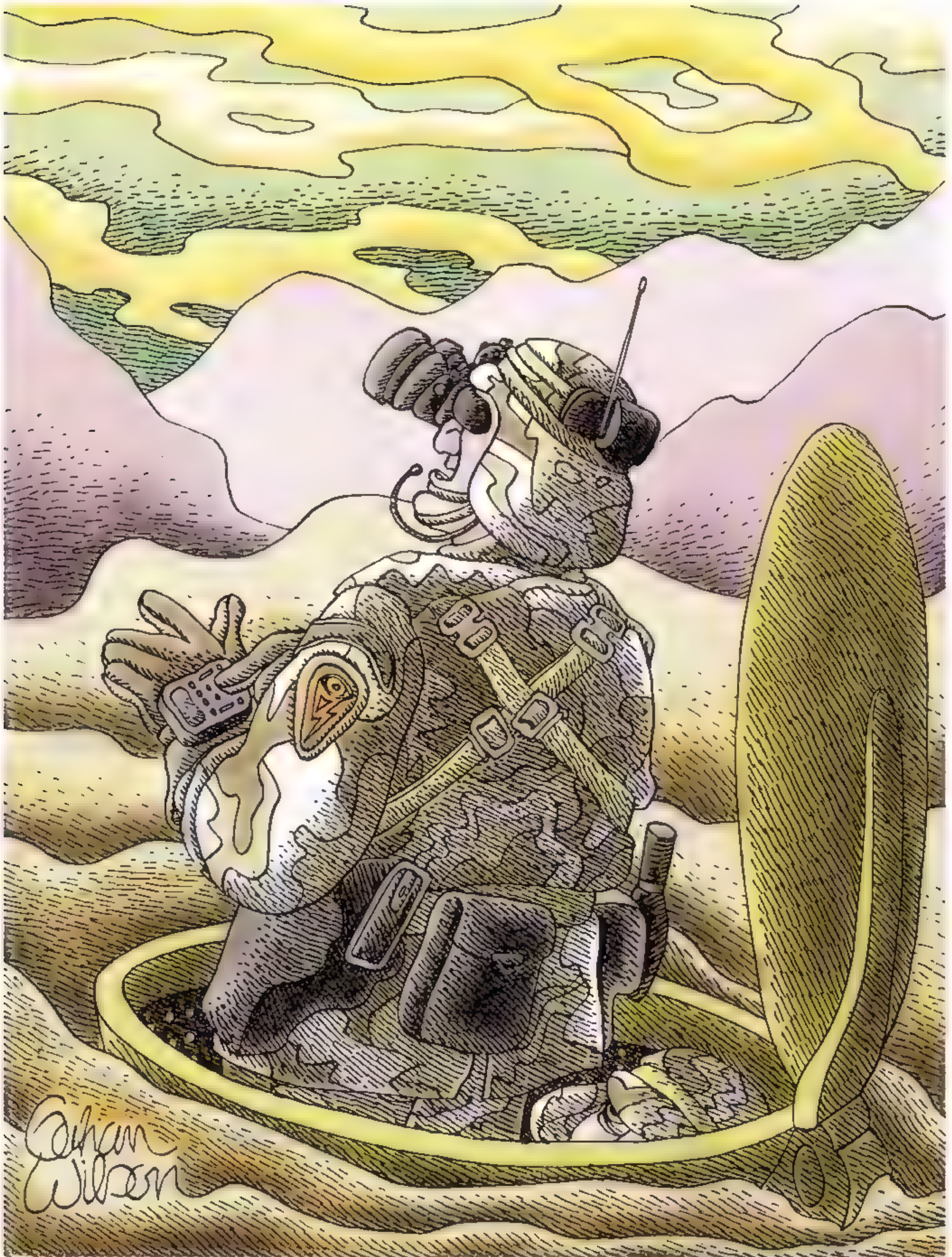
"I've got a feeling this is going to be a rough one!"



"Of course, he's into really kinky sex!"



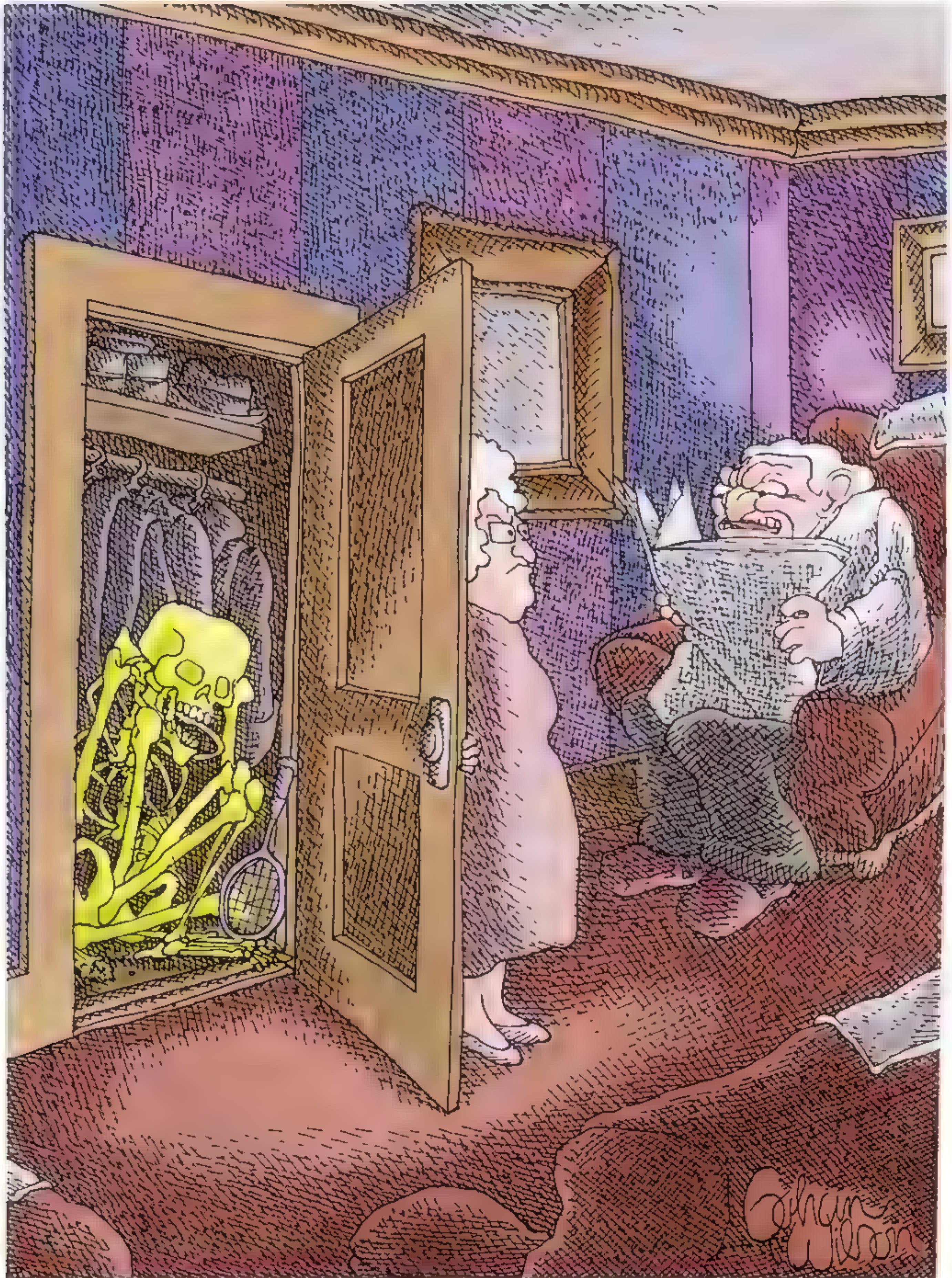
"It's just thrived since I let it have Harry!"



*"Looks like we've taken care of the enemy and
pretty much everything else."*



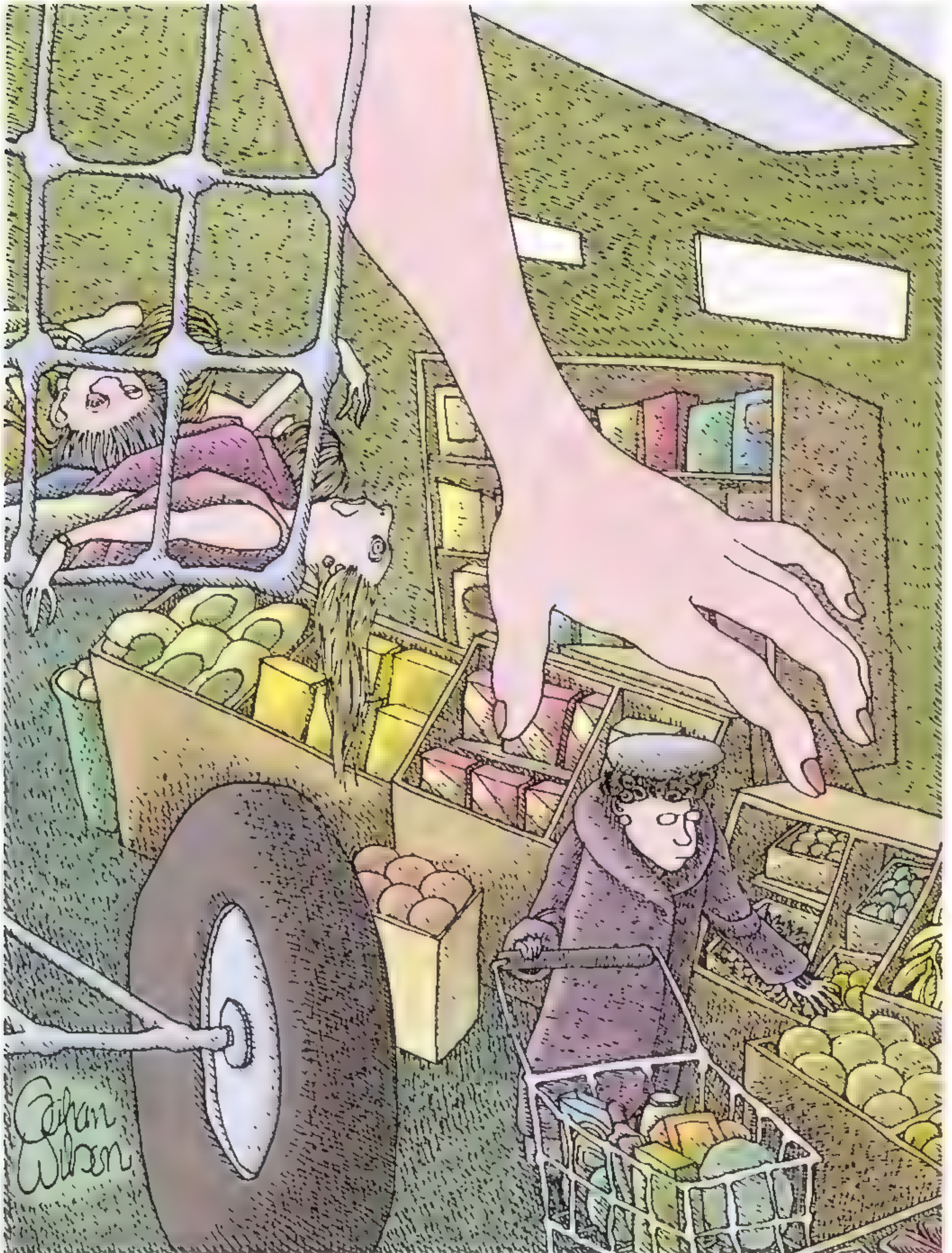
"We've agreed, then—earthlings cannot join the Intergalactic Federation until they've improved the quality of their sitcoms."



"Must you bring that up every time we have an argument?"



"Whatever gave you the idea there'd be a long line?"





"Town really hasn't been the same since the meteor shower."



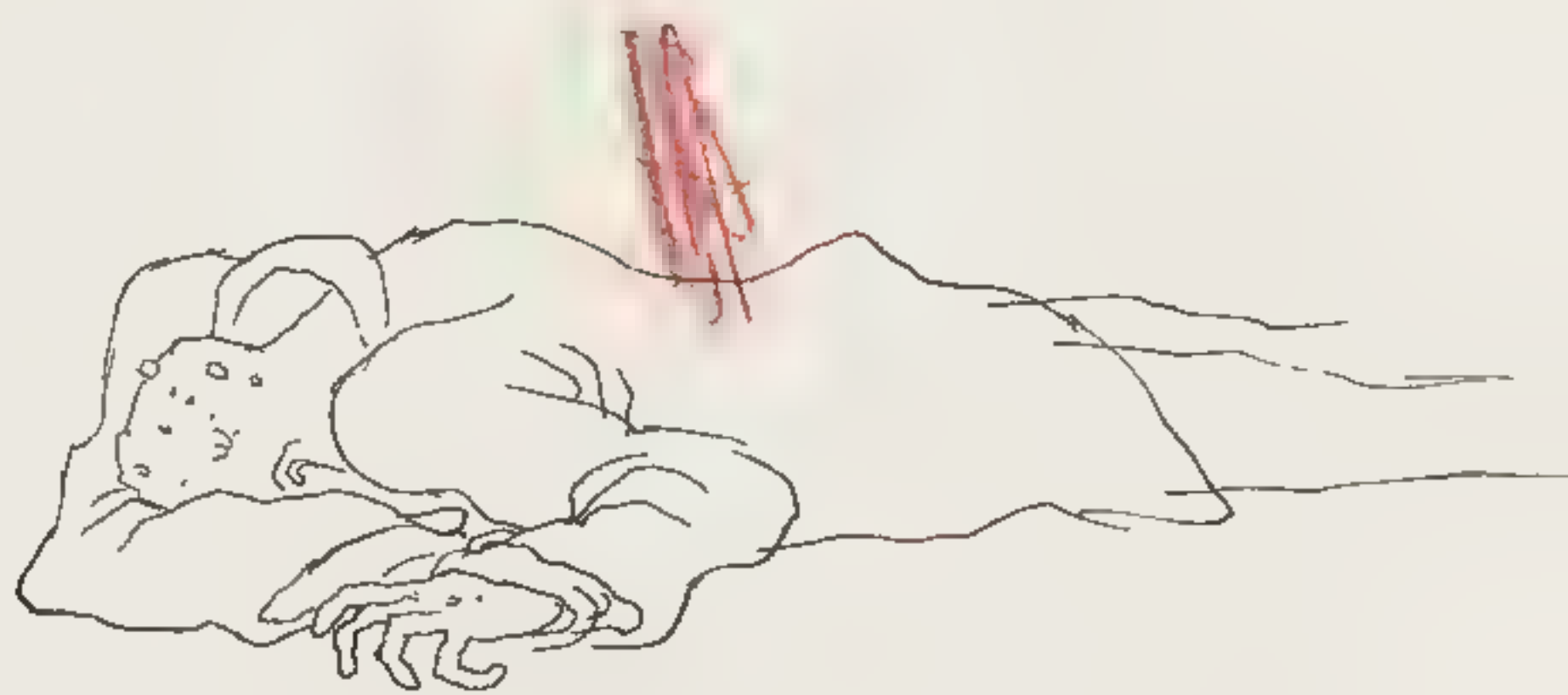
"There is where we put the new casino!"

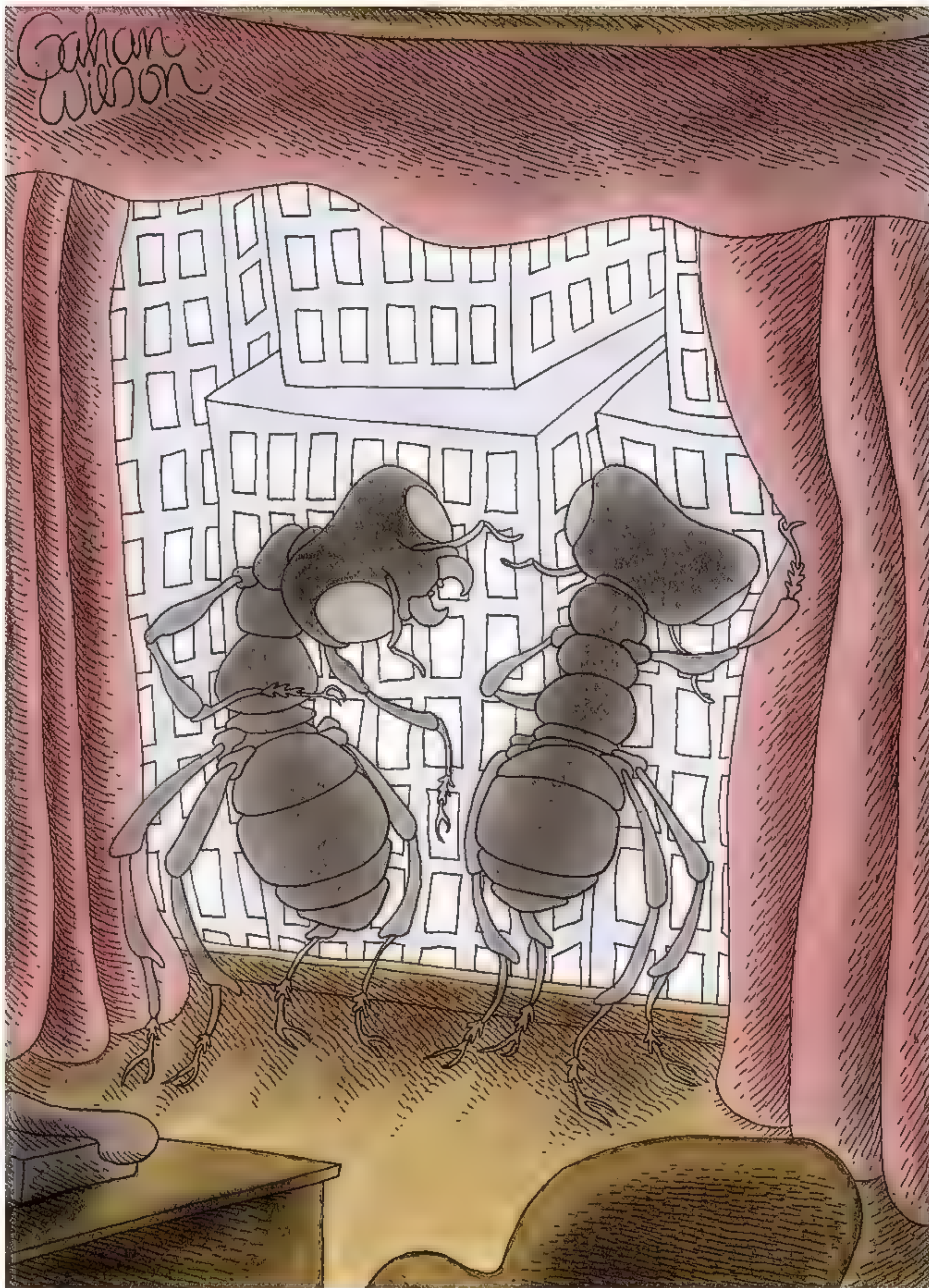


*"I don't care if he did follow you home—
you can't keep him!"*

X X X

"IT STRIKES ME
THIS BOOK IS
PRETTY HARD
ON WOLVES."





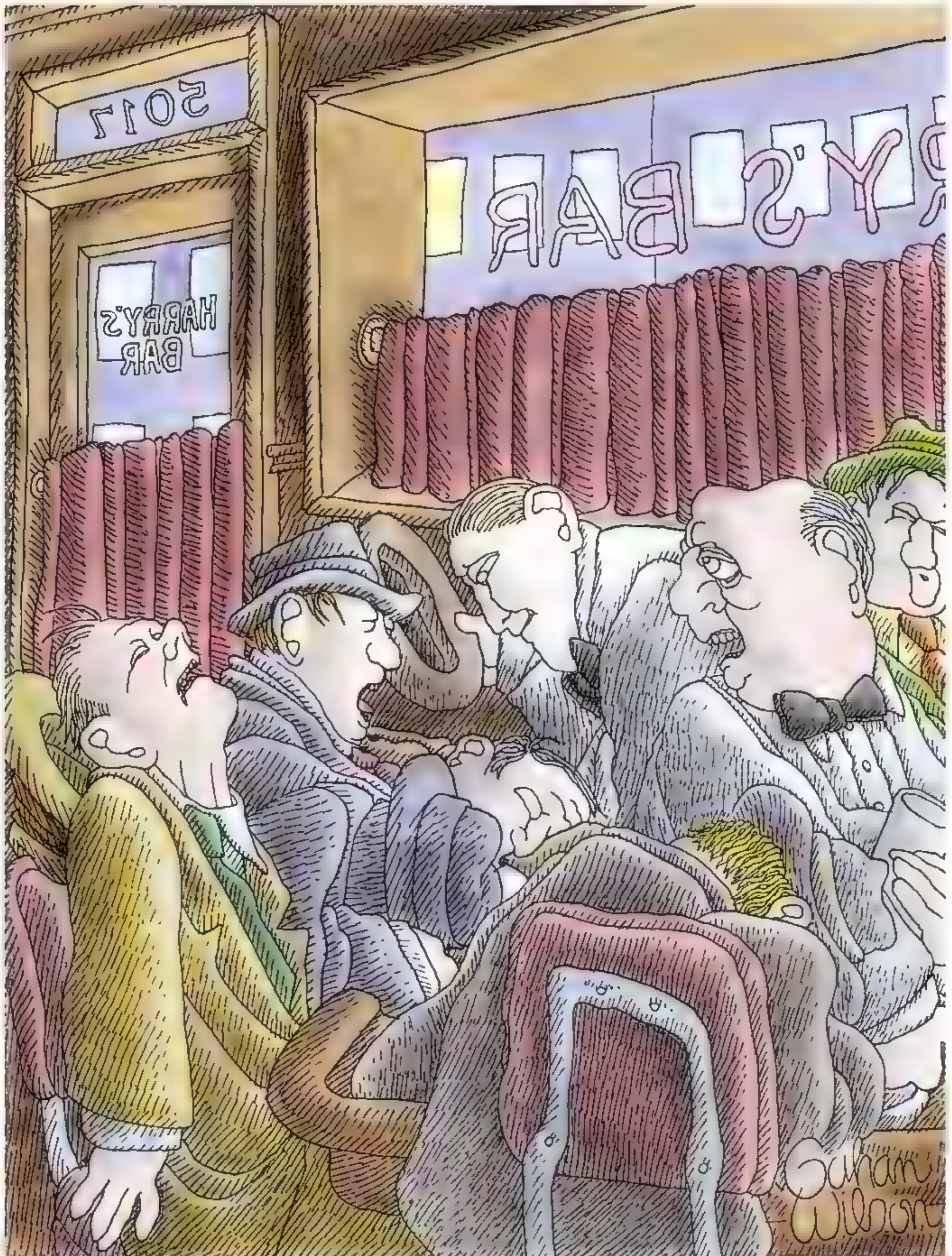
"I love how people look like us from up here!"



"I guess this explains why everybody has had to buy their own Christmas presents since we were kids."



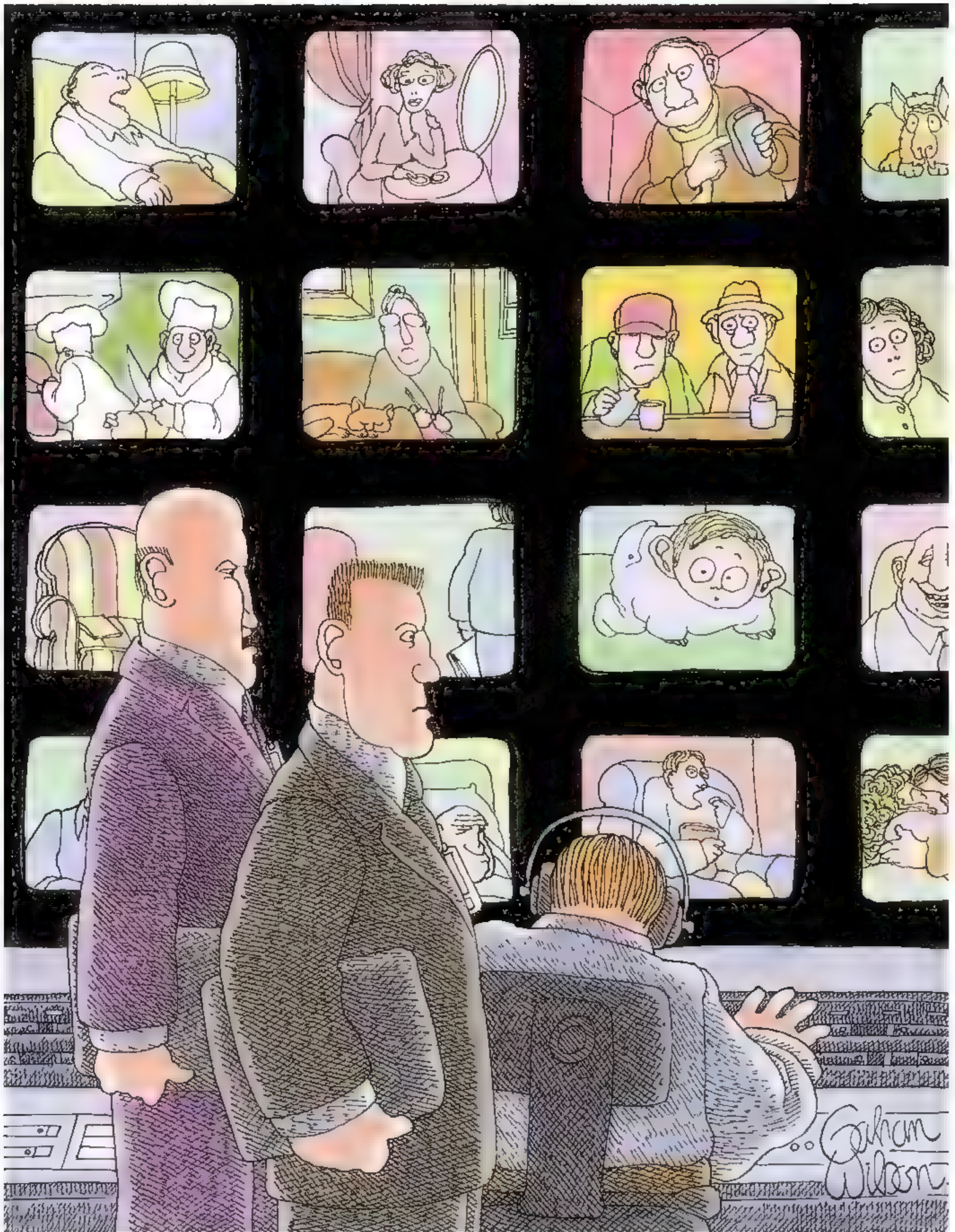
*"Actually, I think it's a cluster of SCUD
missiles heading our way!"*



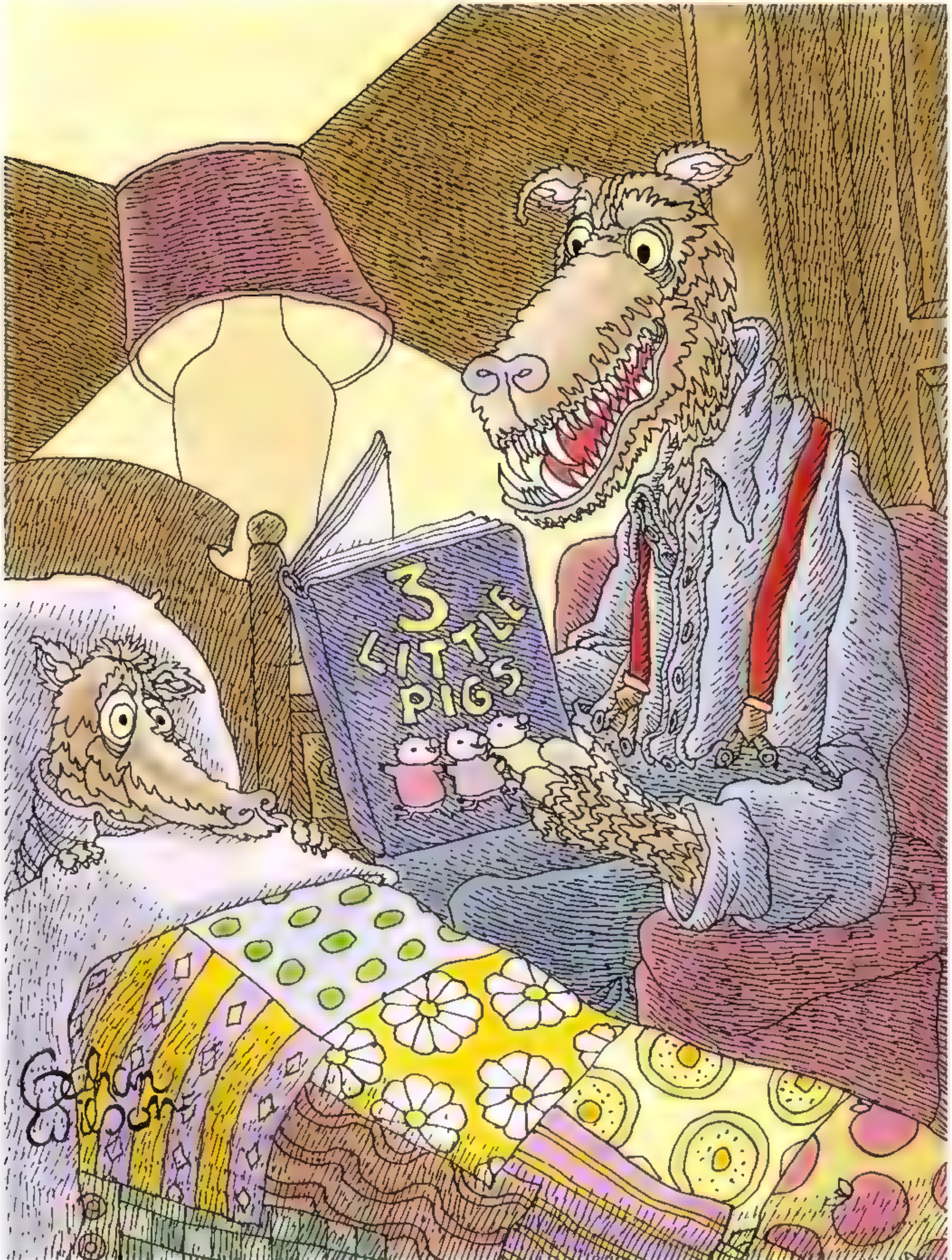
*"Call the organ bank and tell them that we're ready
for tonight's pickup!"*



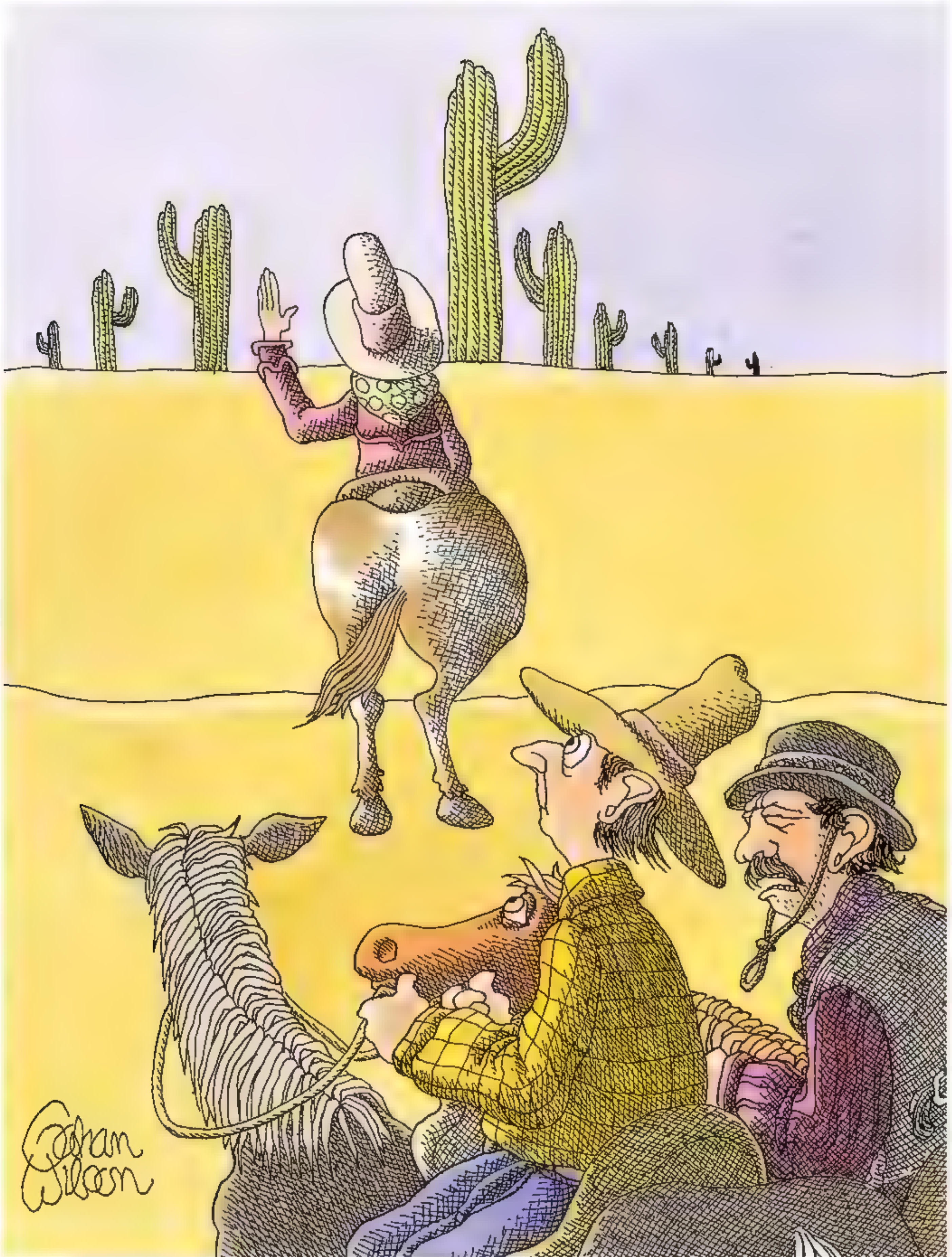
"If he finds his glasses, we're dead!"



"Of course, if they ever start to suspect all their TVs are watching them back, we may have problems."



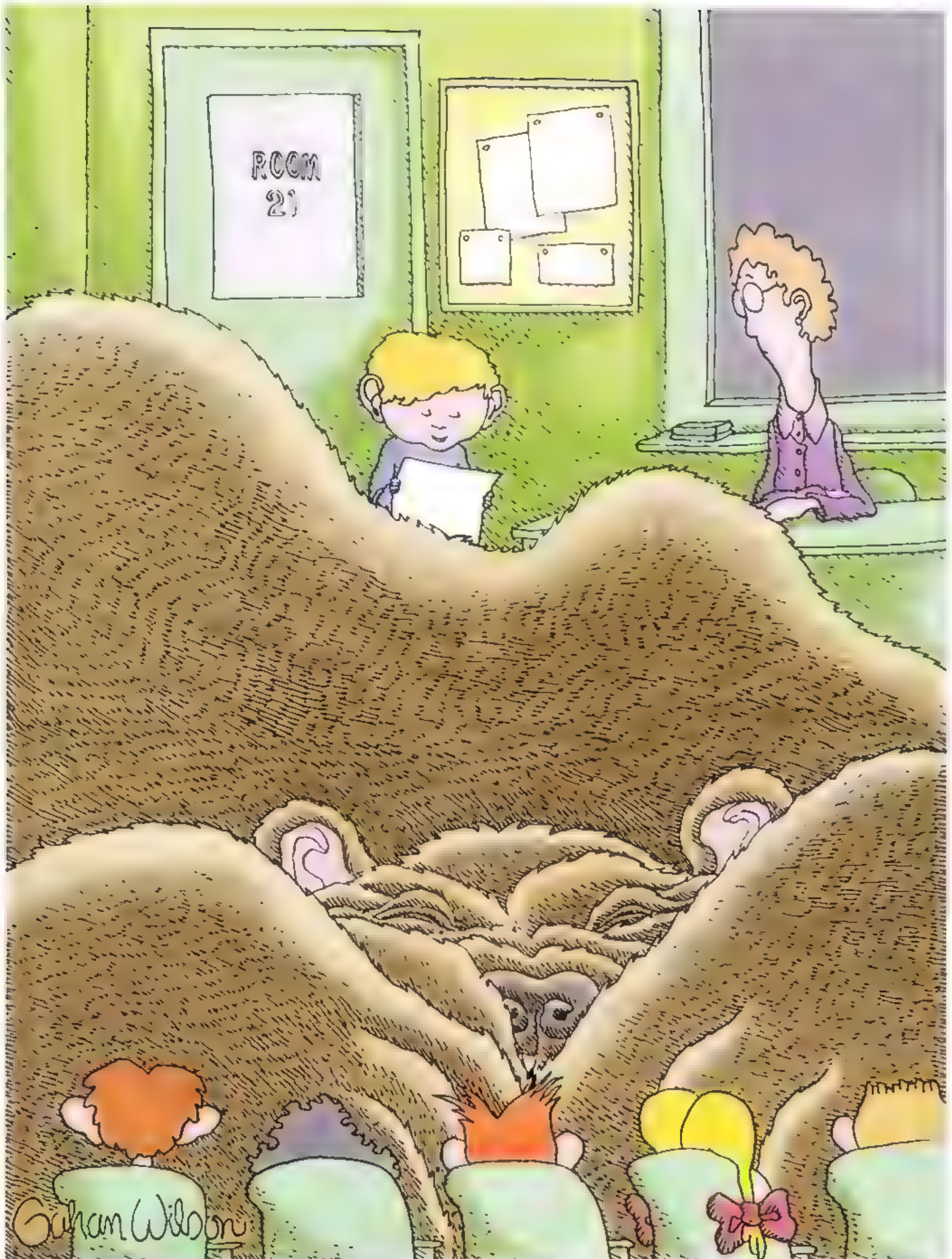
"It strikes me this book is pretty hard on wolves."



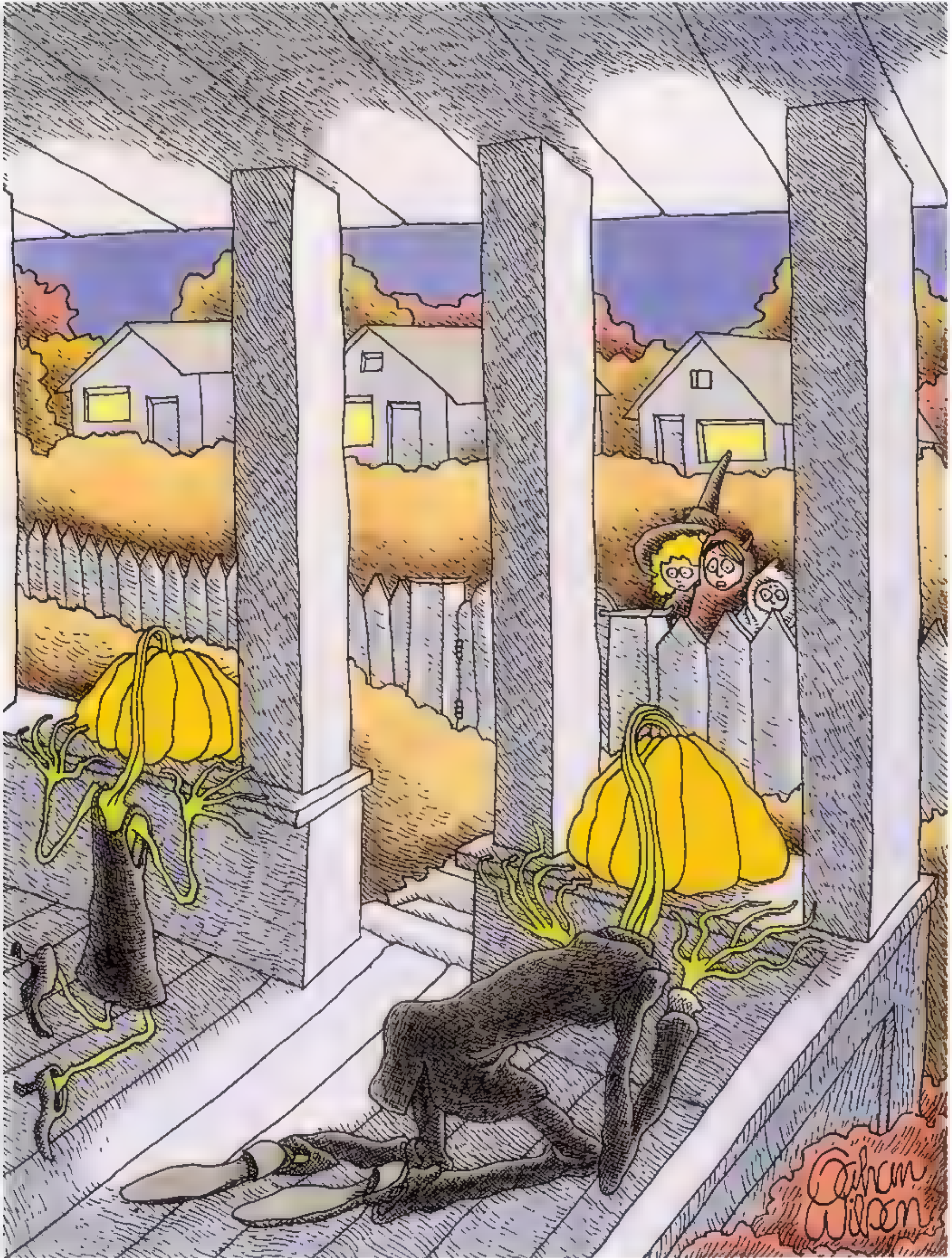
*"It's not a good sign when cowboys start
waving back to the cacti!"*



"I hate to say I told you so!"



*"...and that's how I came to kill this bear
during my summer vacation."*



"I don't like the look of those pumpkins!"



"I've got this awful feeling we took the wrong boat!"



"The freezer's almost empty, so be sure to bring back more bad boys and girls than you did last year!"



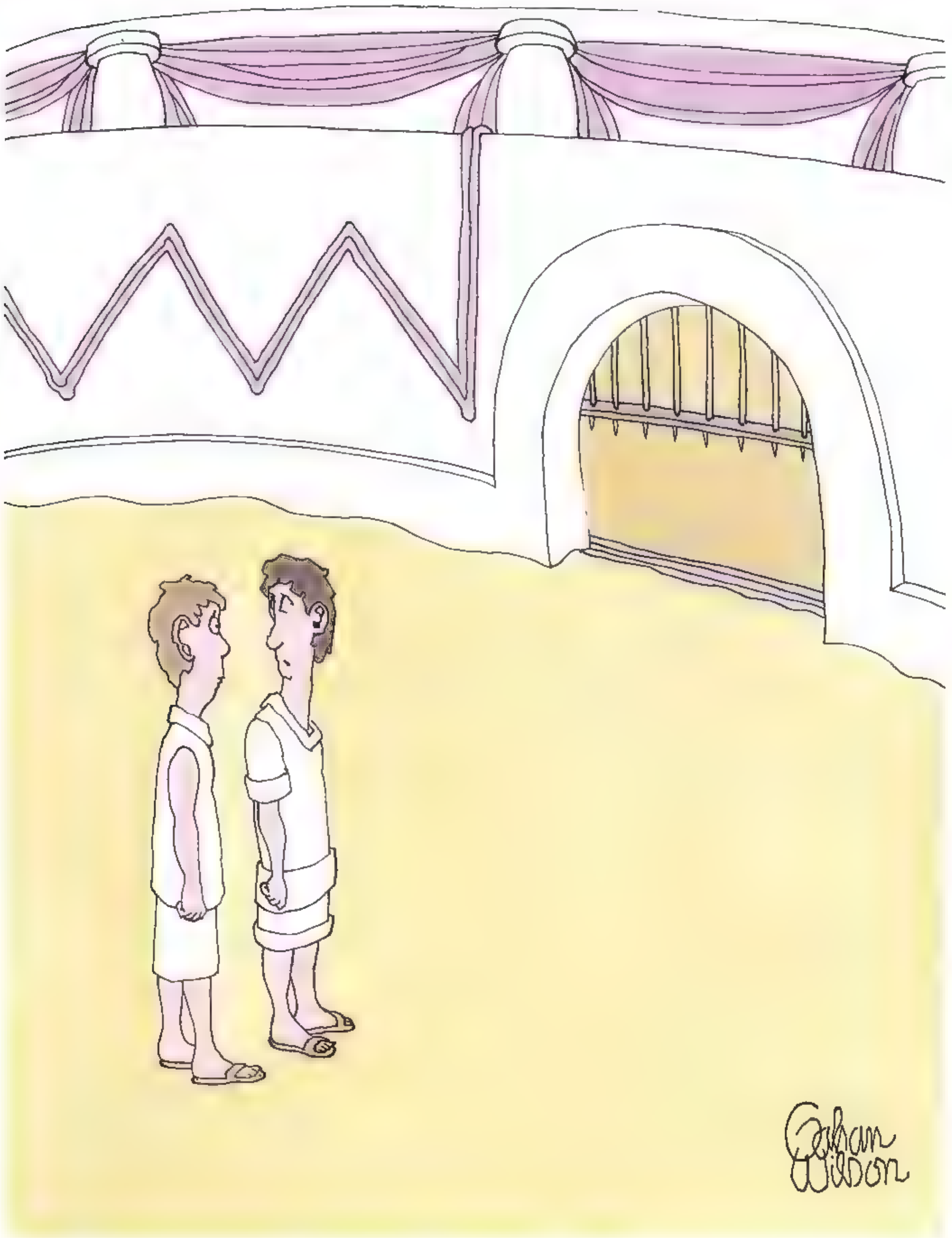
"Short straw gets the ribbon and the diaper!"



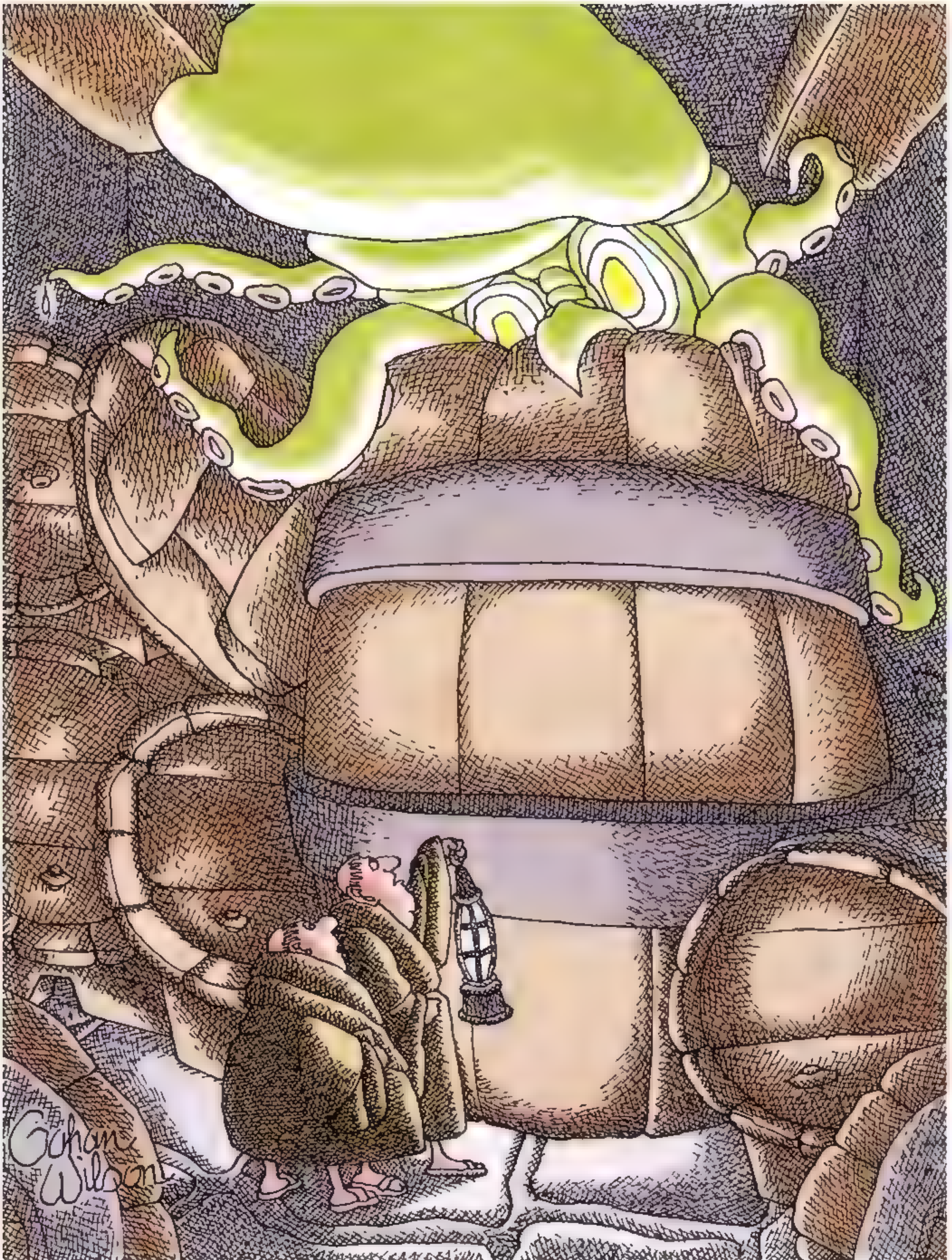
*"Is this the first time you've realized
I'm an hallucination?"*



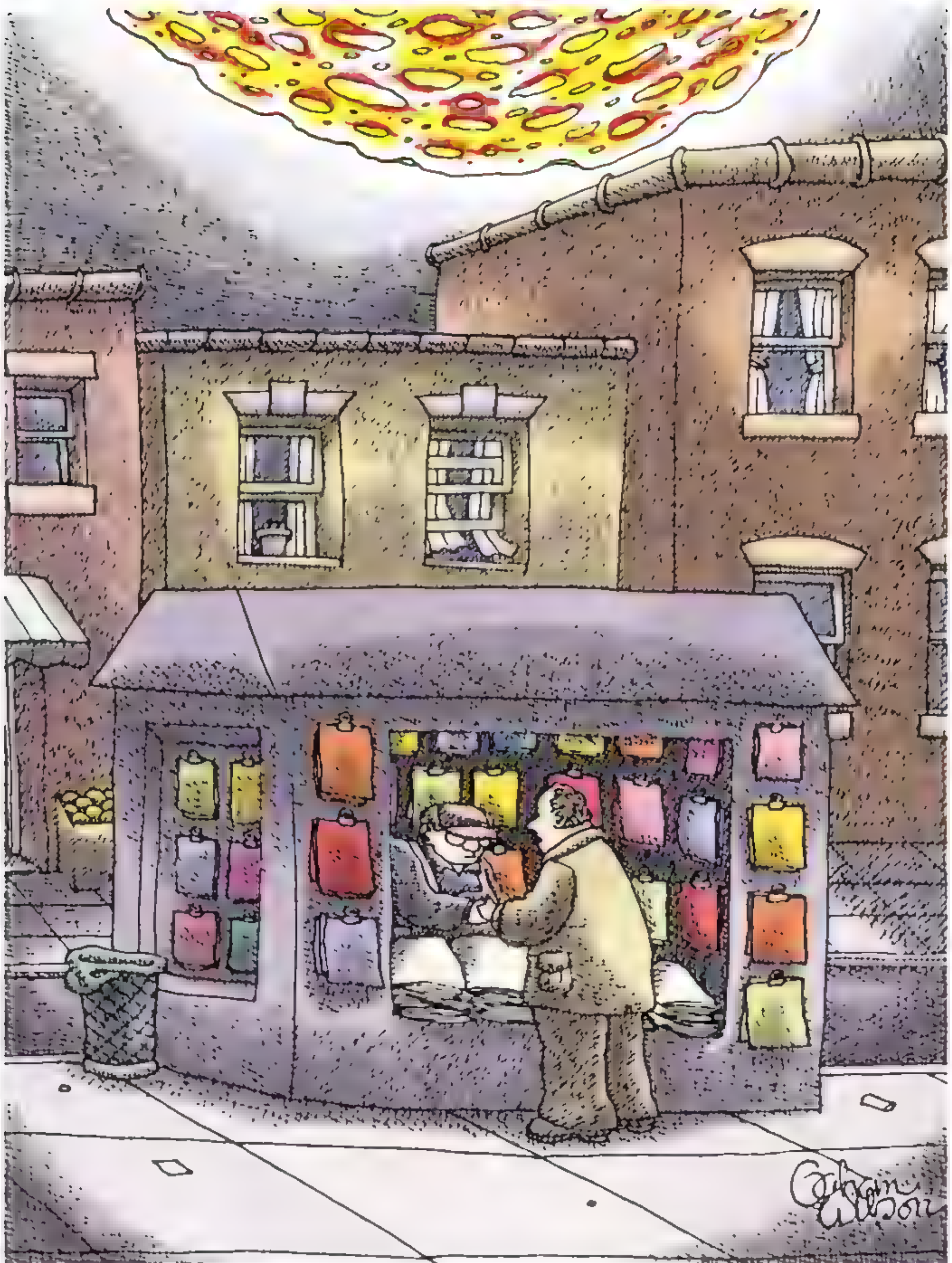
"He turns into this horrible thing every full moon!"



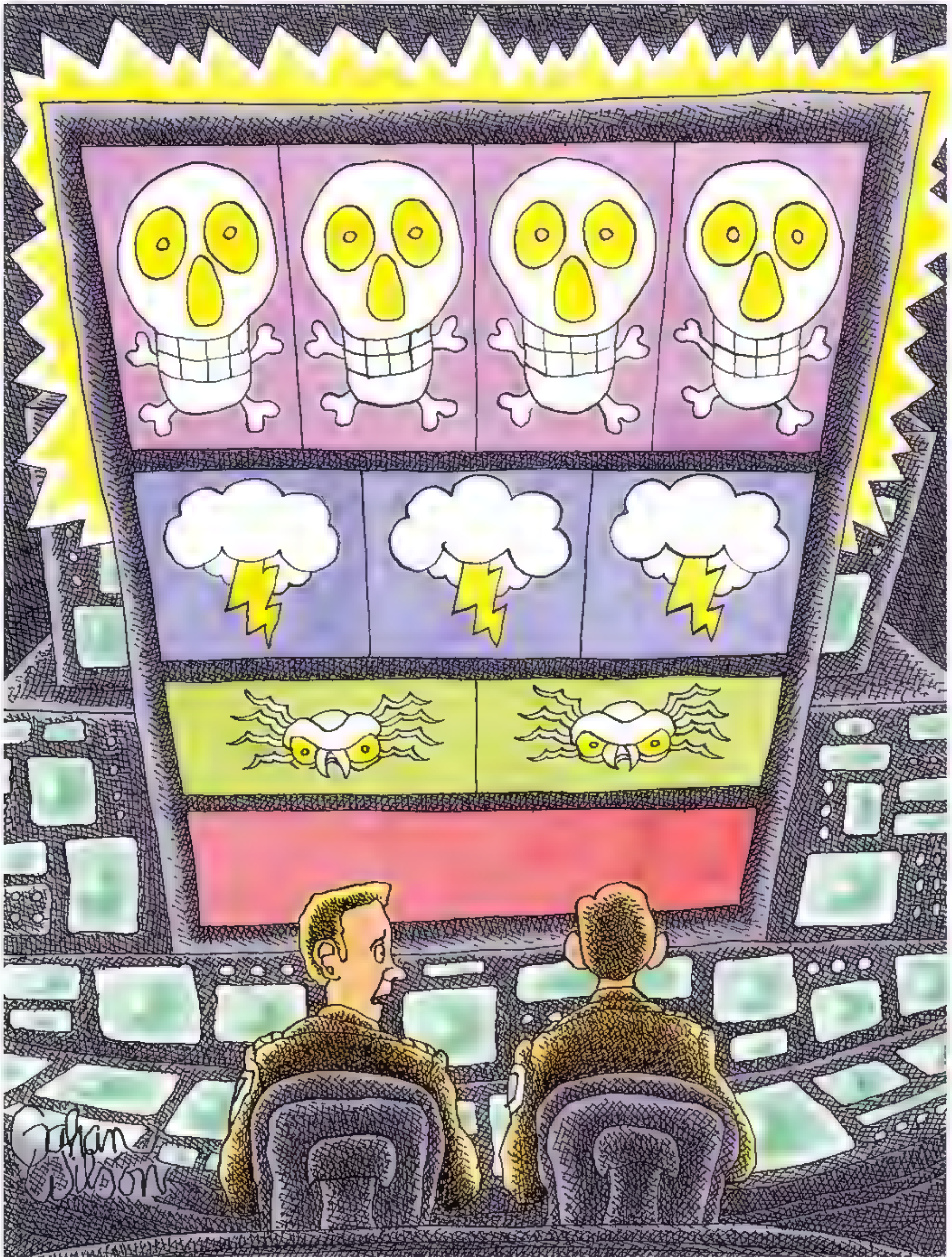
"Don't worry, the lions do all the work."



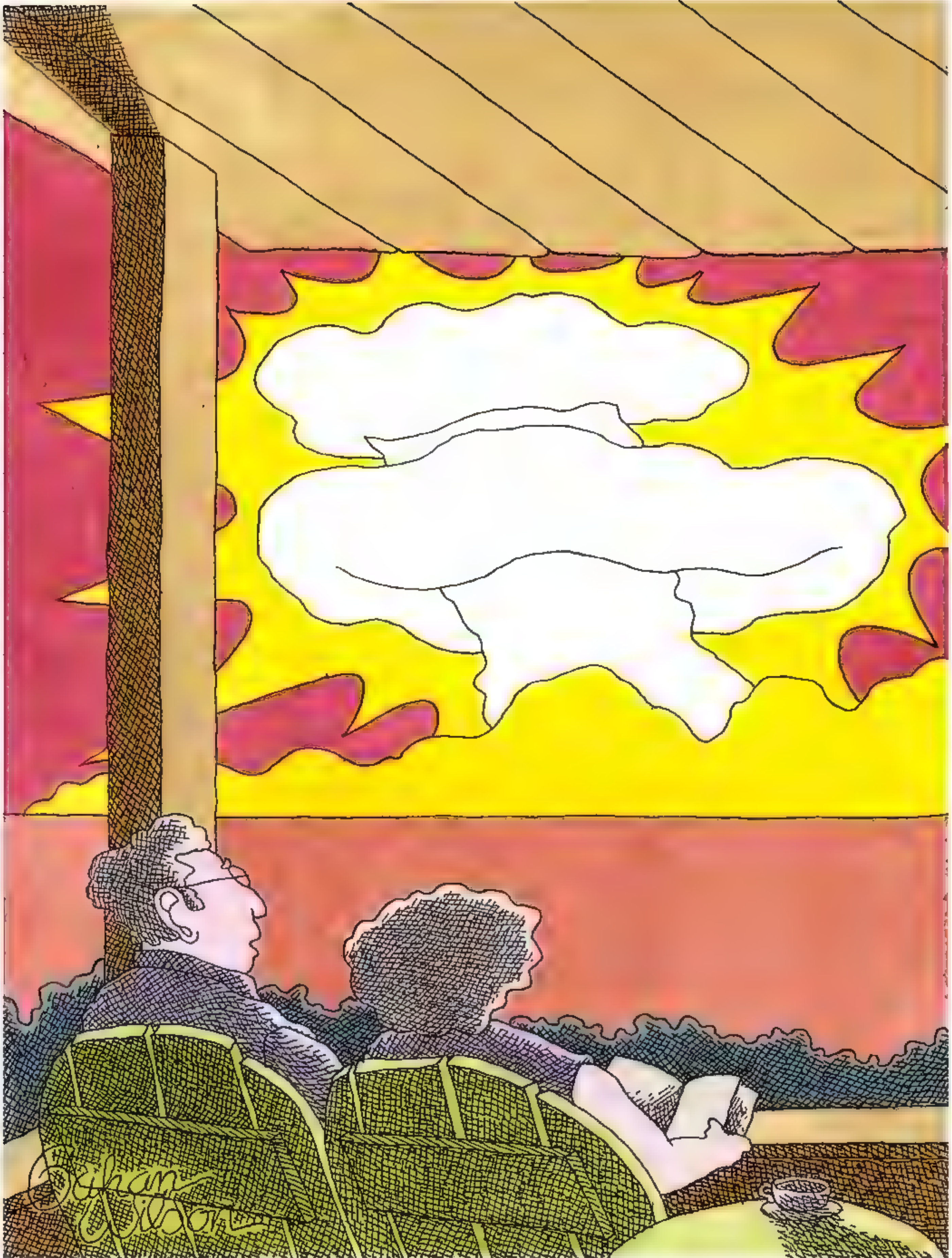
"So much for that vintage!"



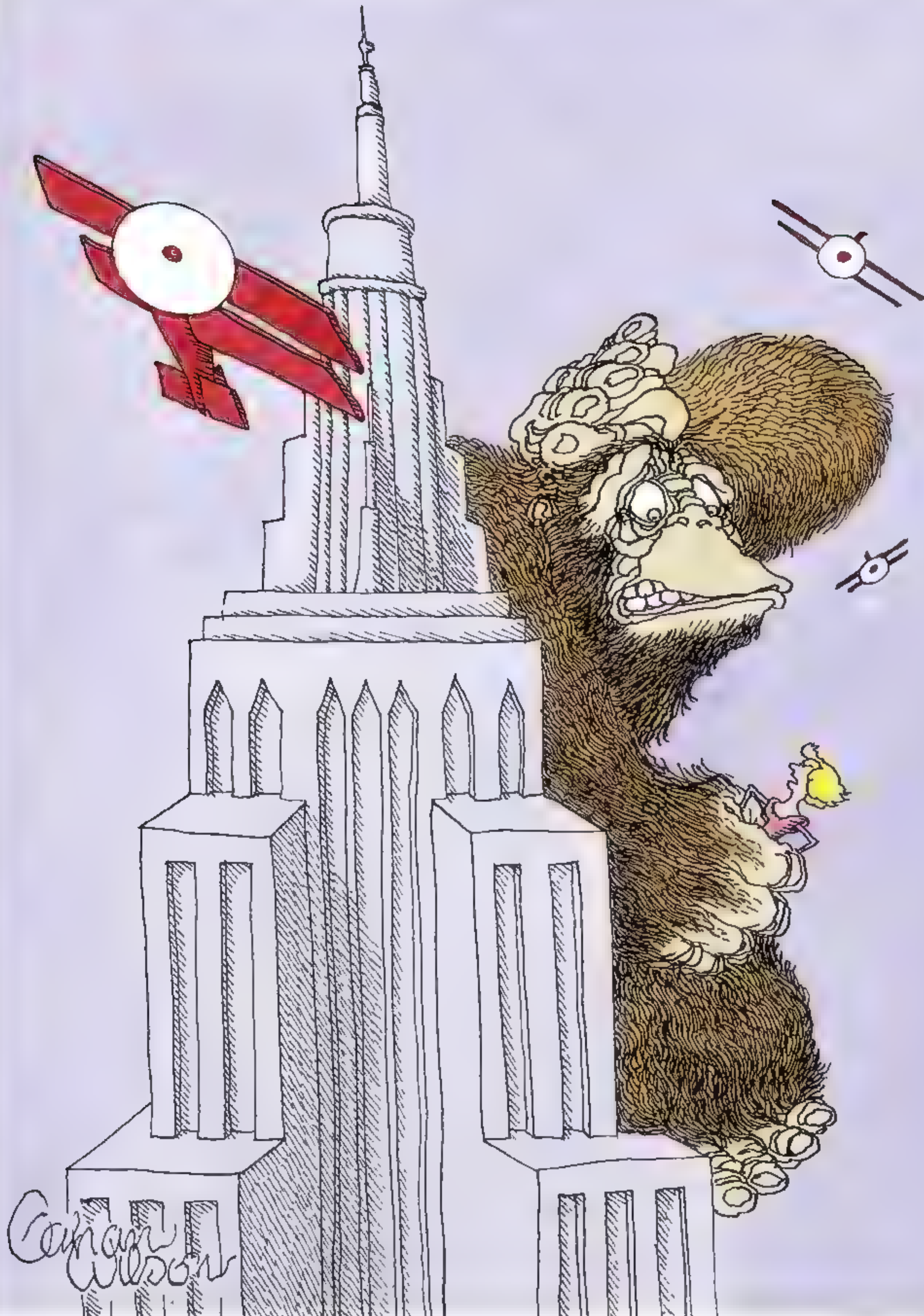
"Anything new on that meteor?"



"It looks like we've moved way past condition red!"



*"Well, I guess that pretty much takes care
of our retirement plans."*



"This is positively your worst vacation idea ever!"



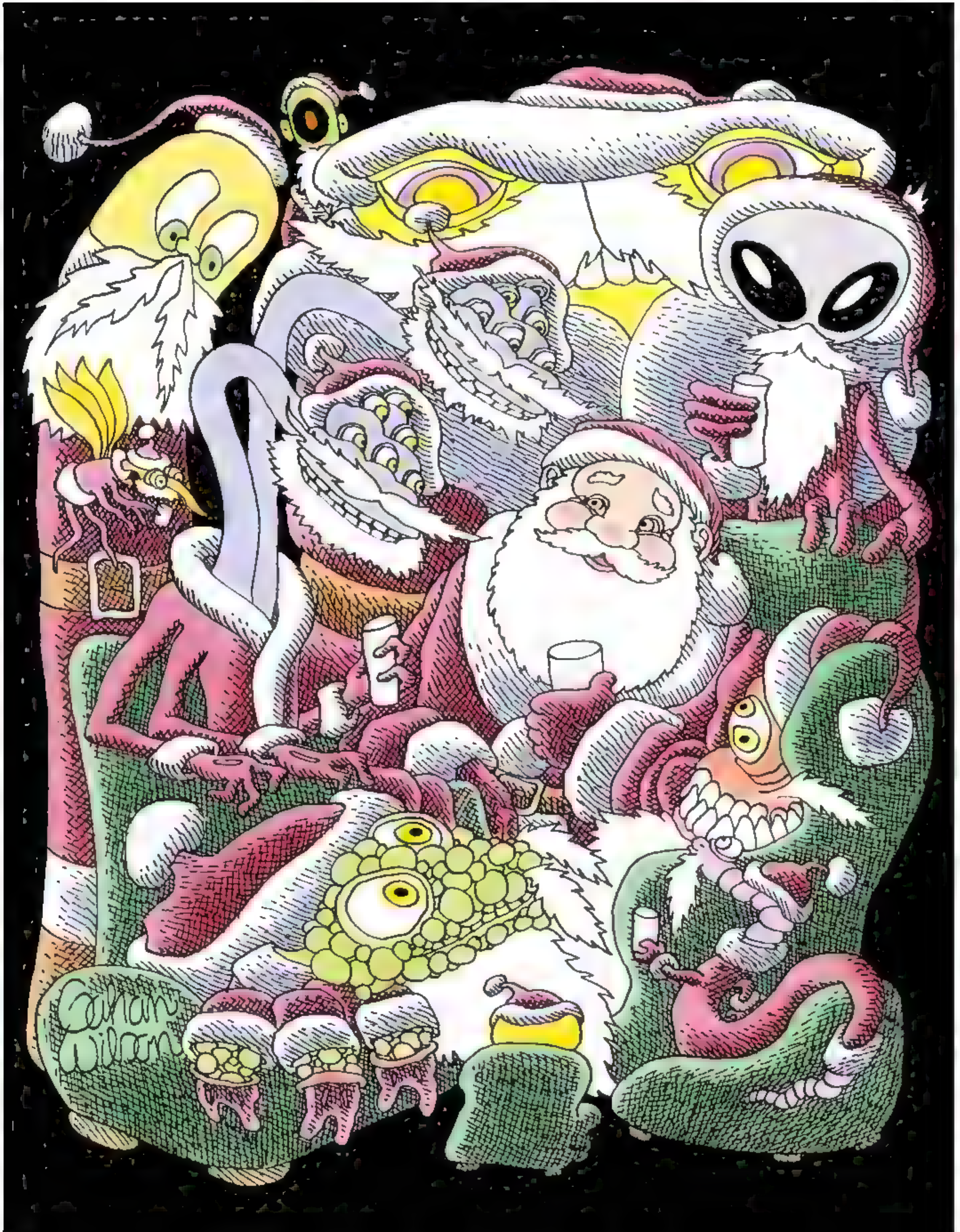
"I told you we should have given them treats!"



"Fortunately, we have an excellent selection!"



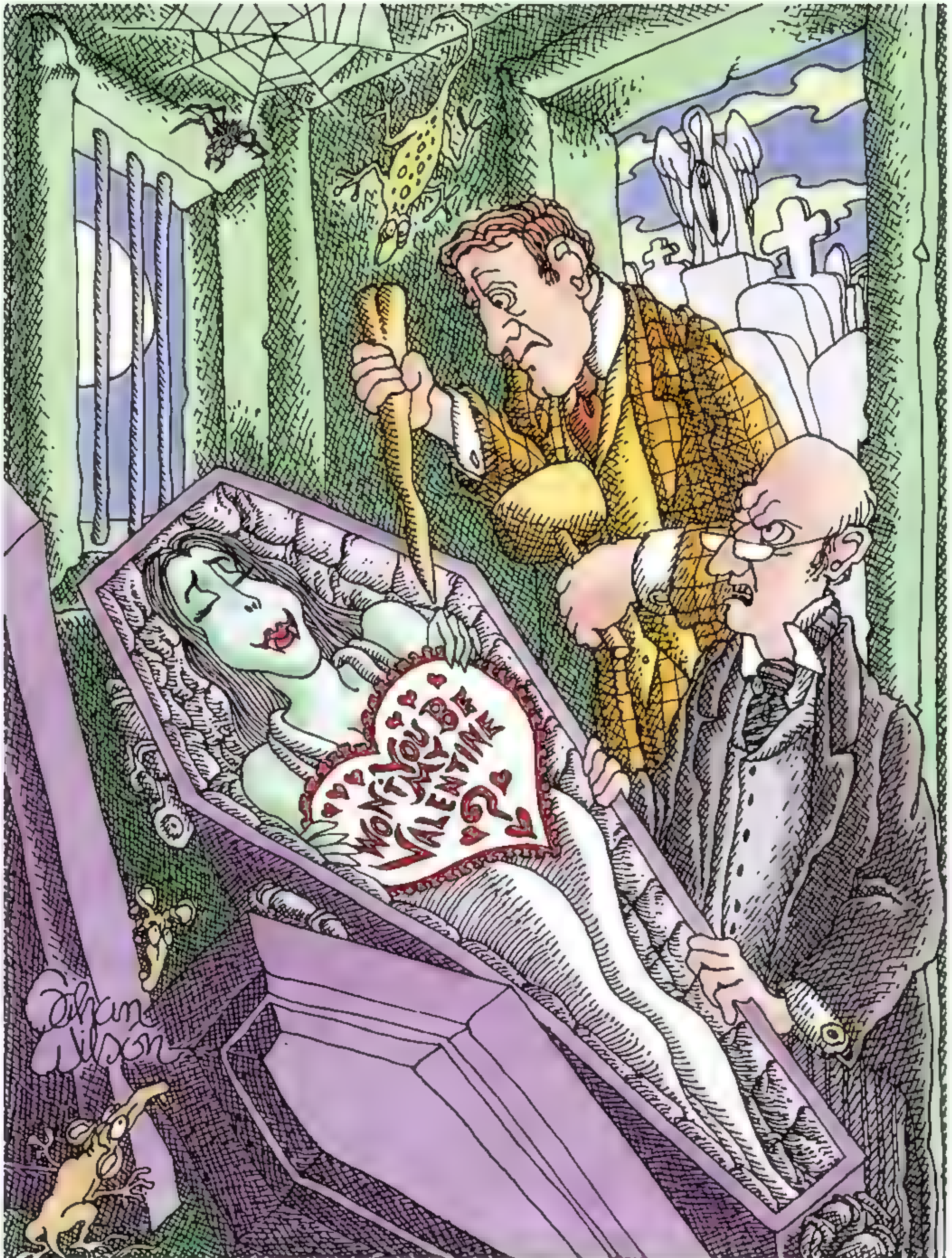
"As if we didn't have enough mouths to feed already!"



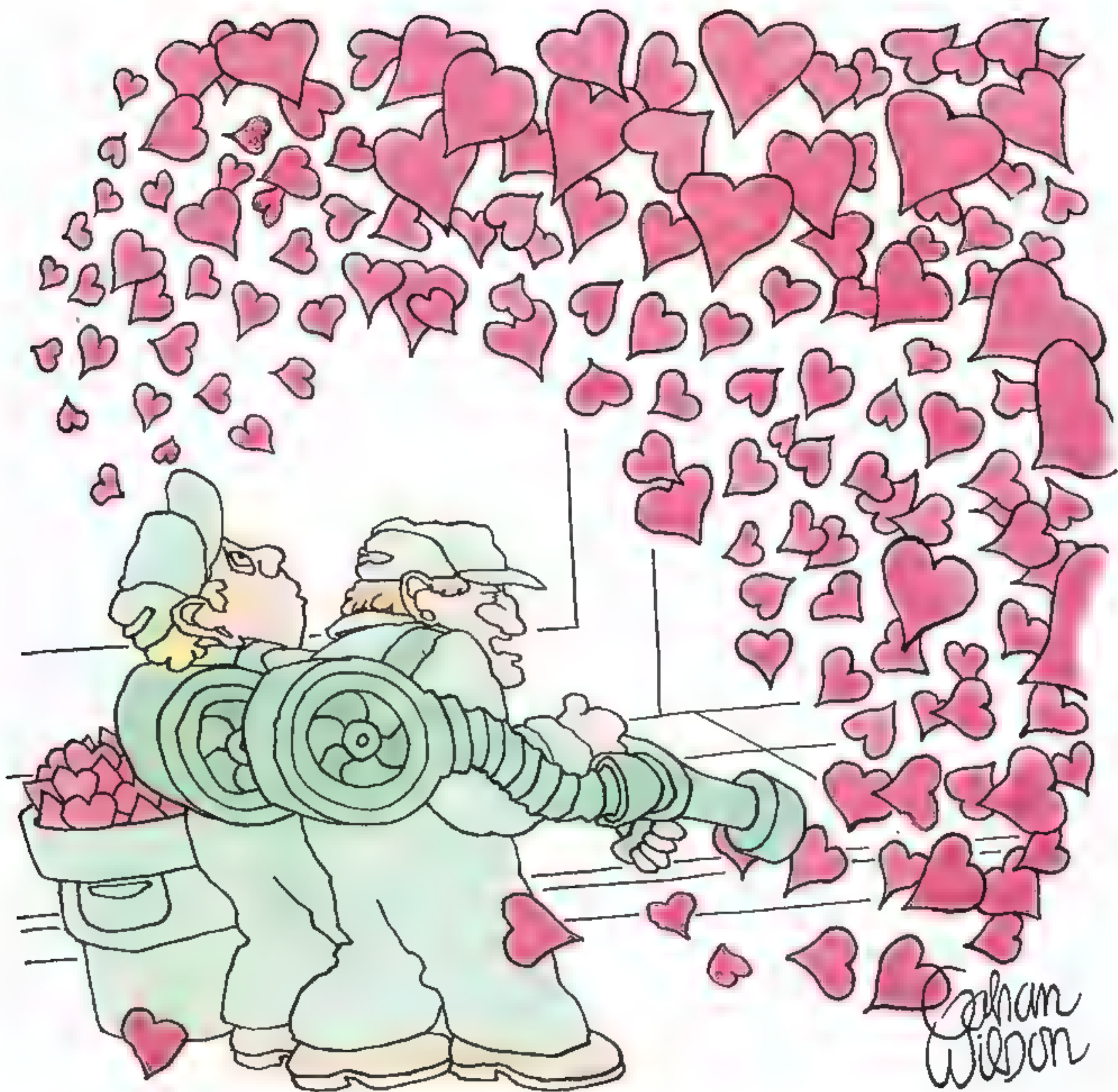
"Personally, I'd love to have the next Intergalactic Santa Convention held on my planet, but the earthlings might panic."



"Sorry, kid, but I don't whack parents."



"Don't be a sentimental fool, Harker!"



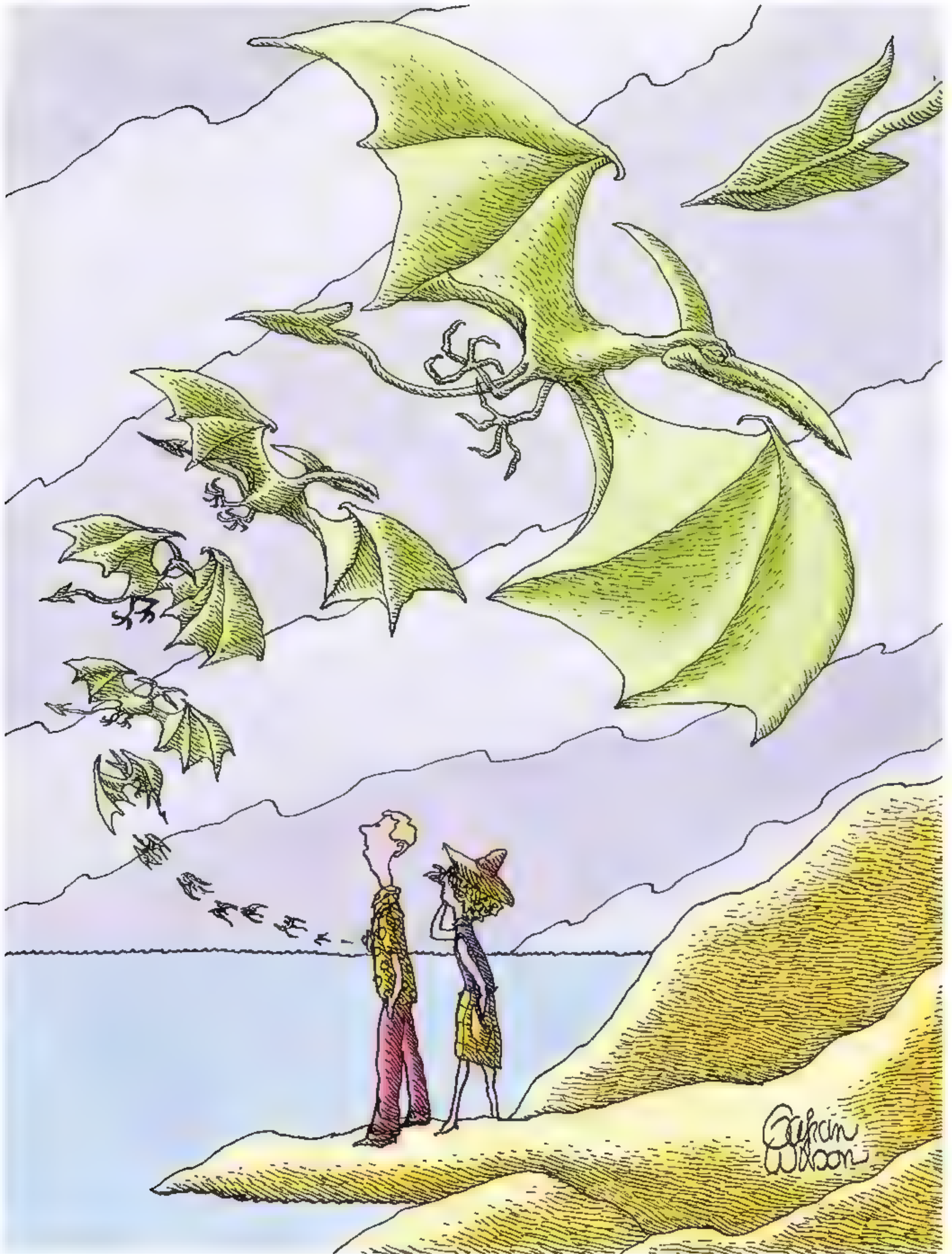
"They don't call it 'The Boulevard of Broken Dreams' for nothing, kid."



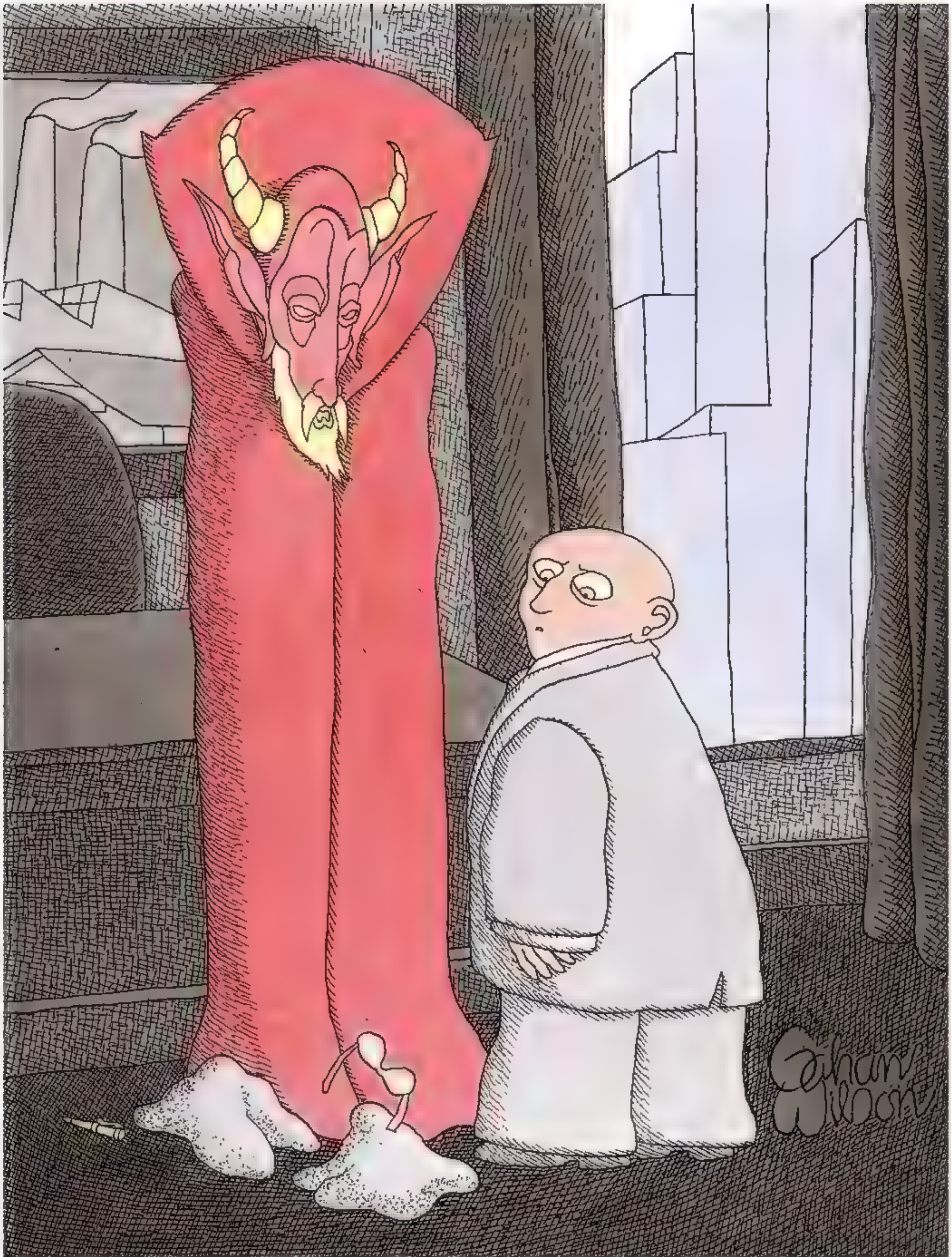
"That probably explains the dog barking last night!"



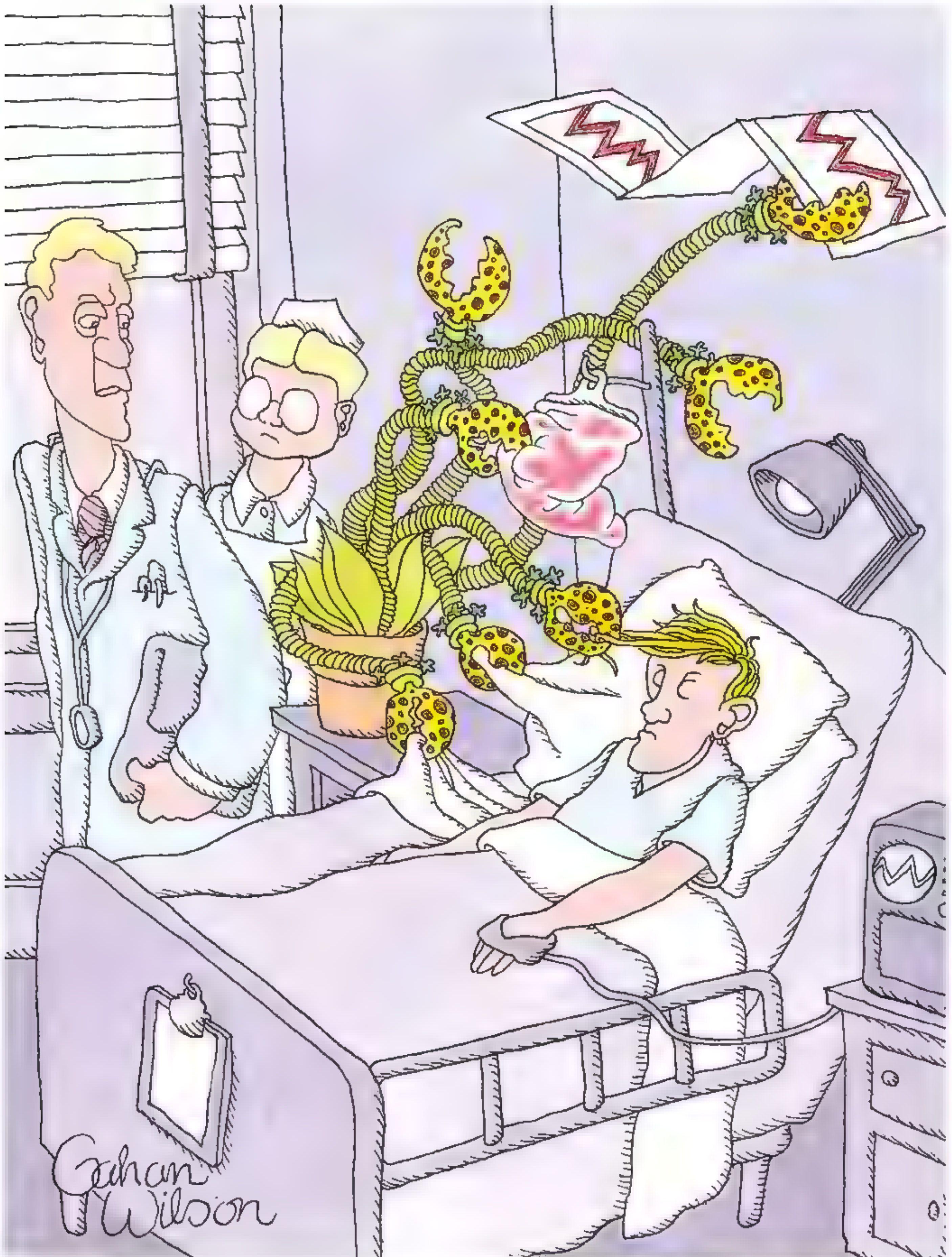
"Good evening, Mr. Harper, and how is Mrs. Harper?"



"I think the return of the pterodactyls is a little ominous!"



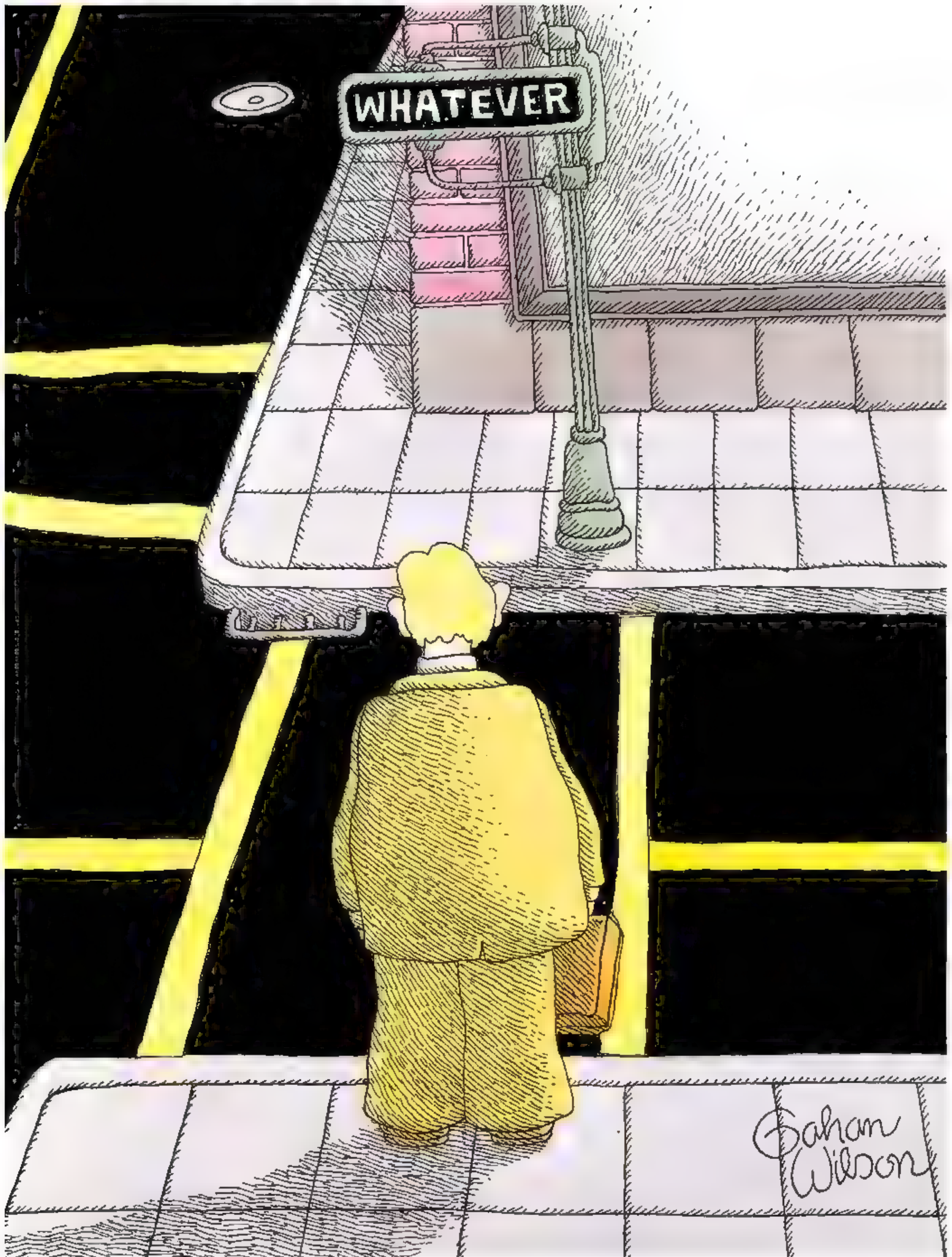
"So much for your attorneys."



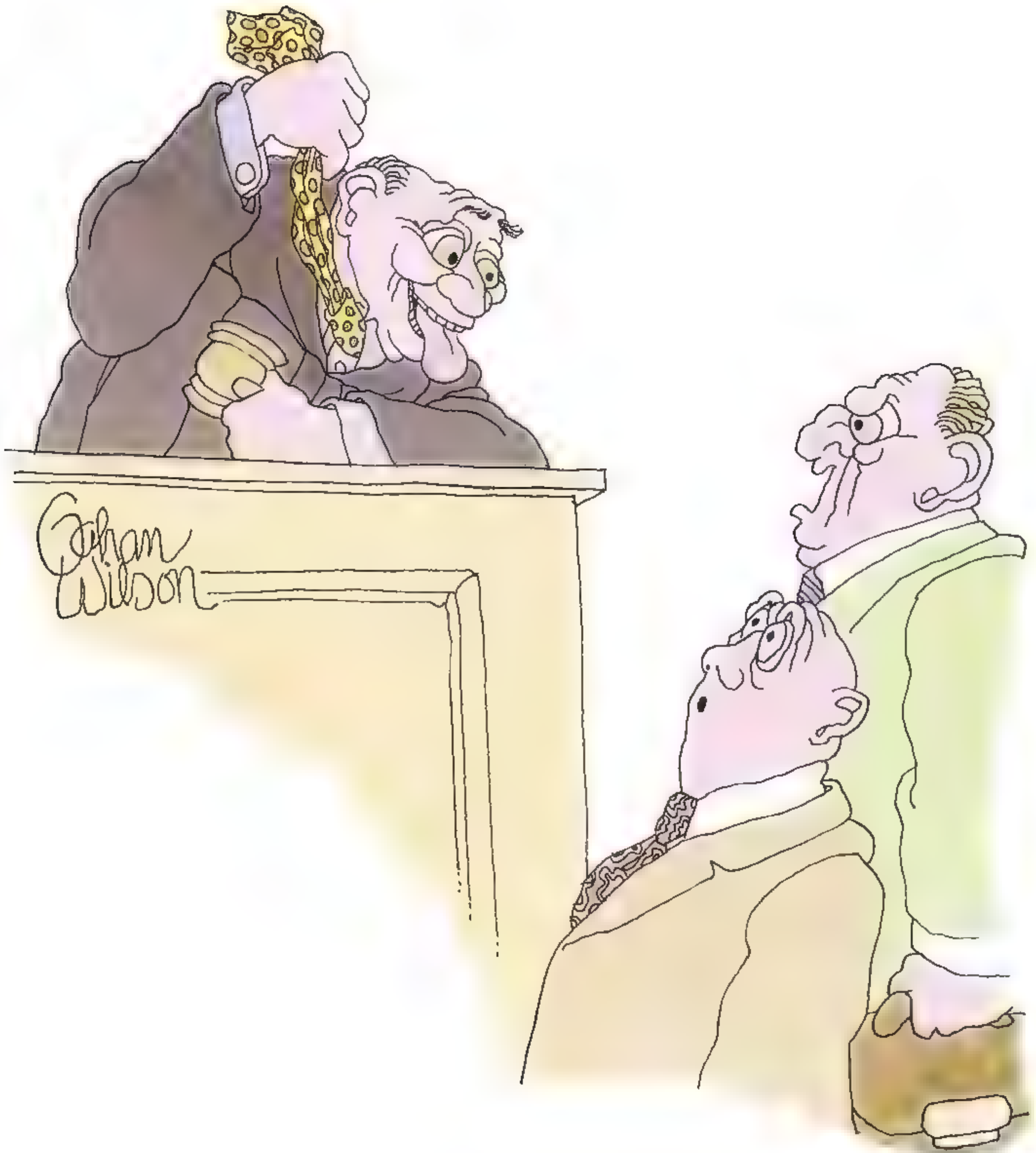
"Oh, and get rid of the plant!"



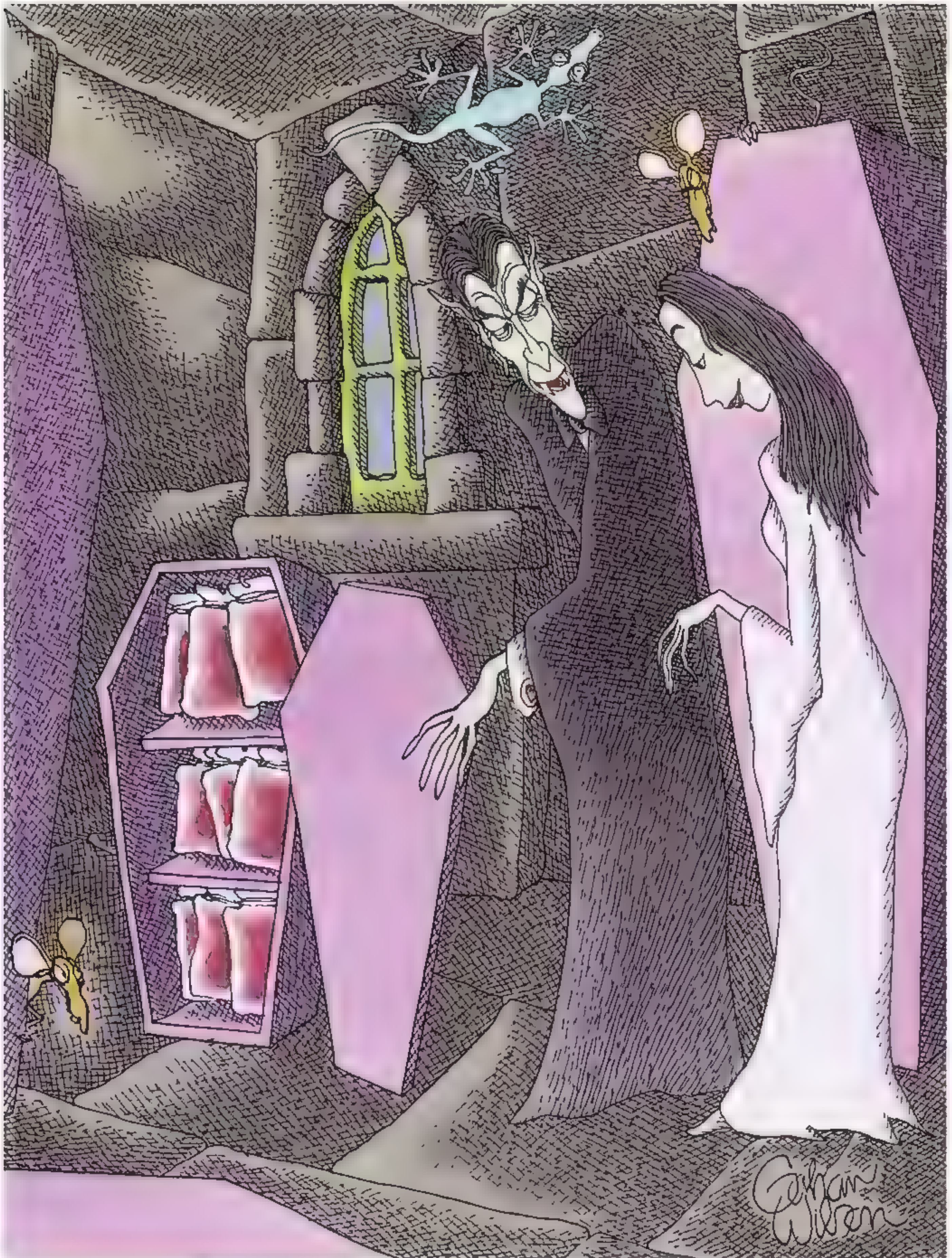
"Such a cute little thing—what do you call it?"



Graham
Wilson



"Really, your Honor!"



"...And here is the snack bar."

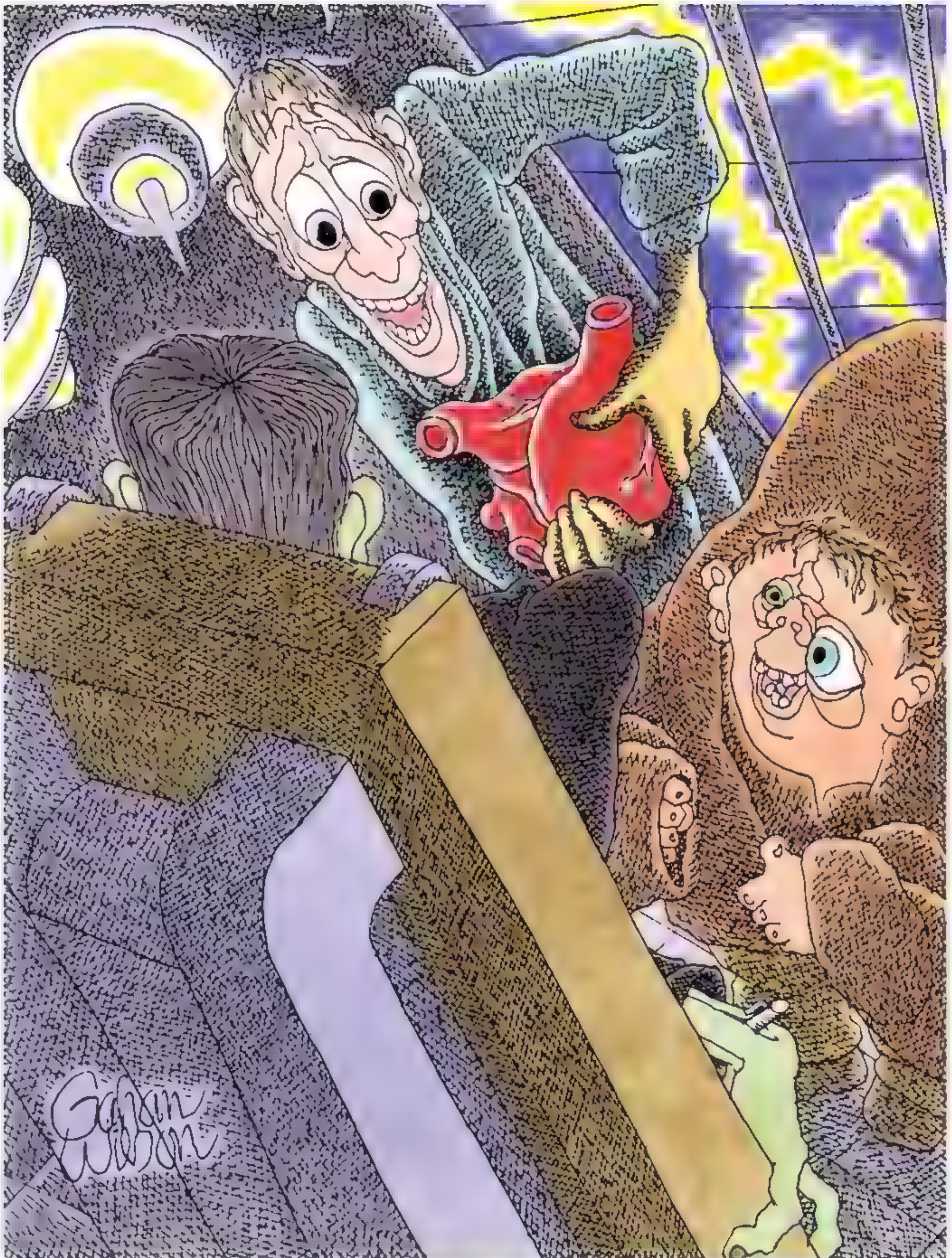


*"...But then it turned out there weren't any
WMDs on the moon after all."*

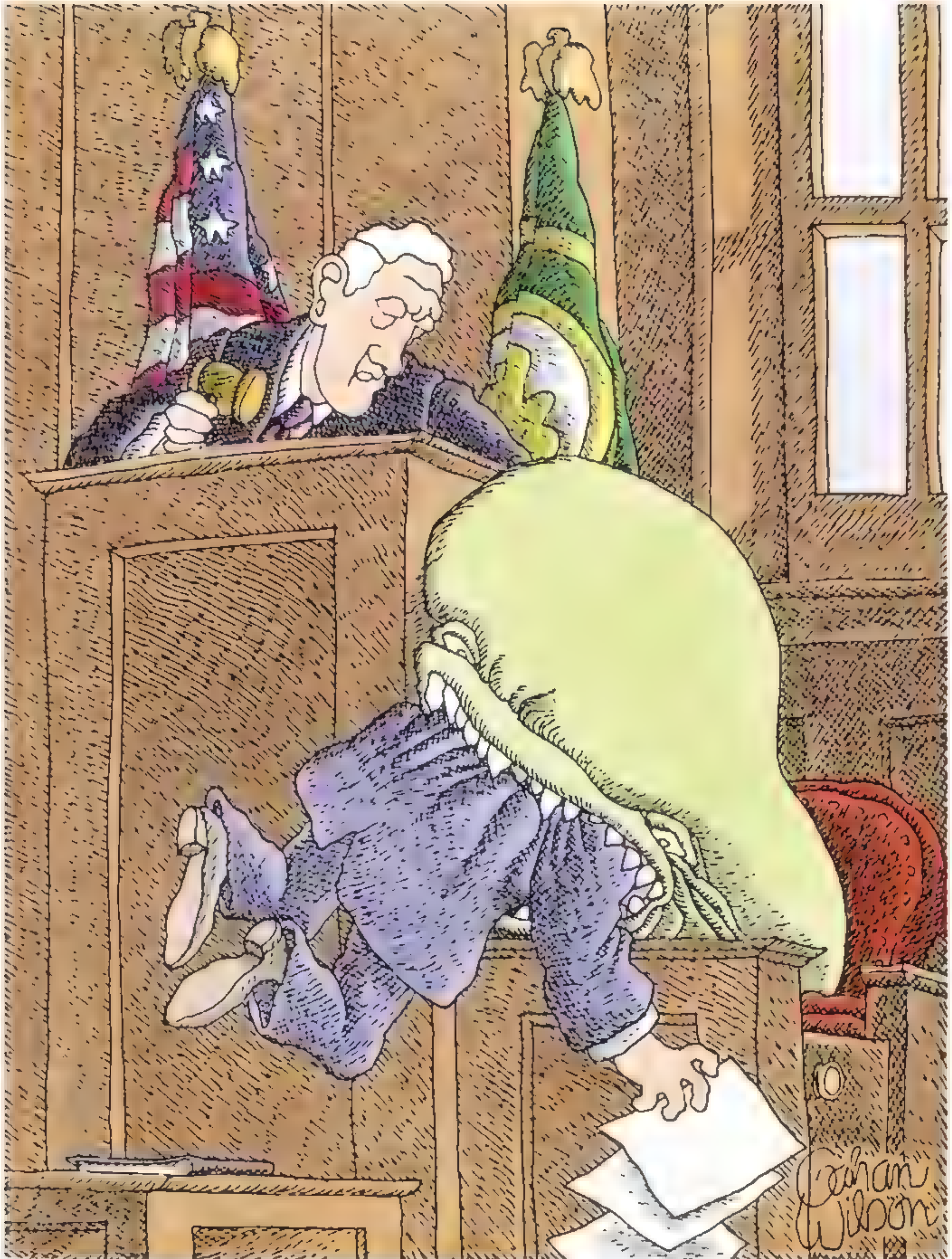




"Hate to say I told you so!"



"I'm so glad you suggested we insert his heart on Valentine's Day!"



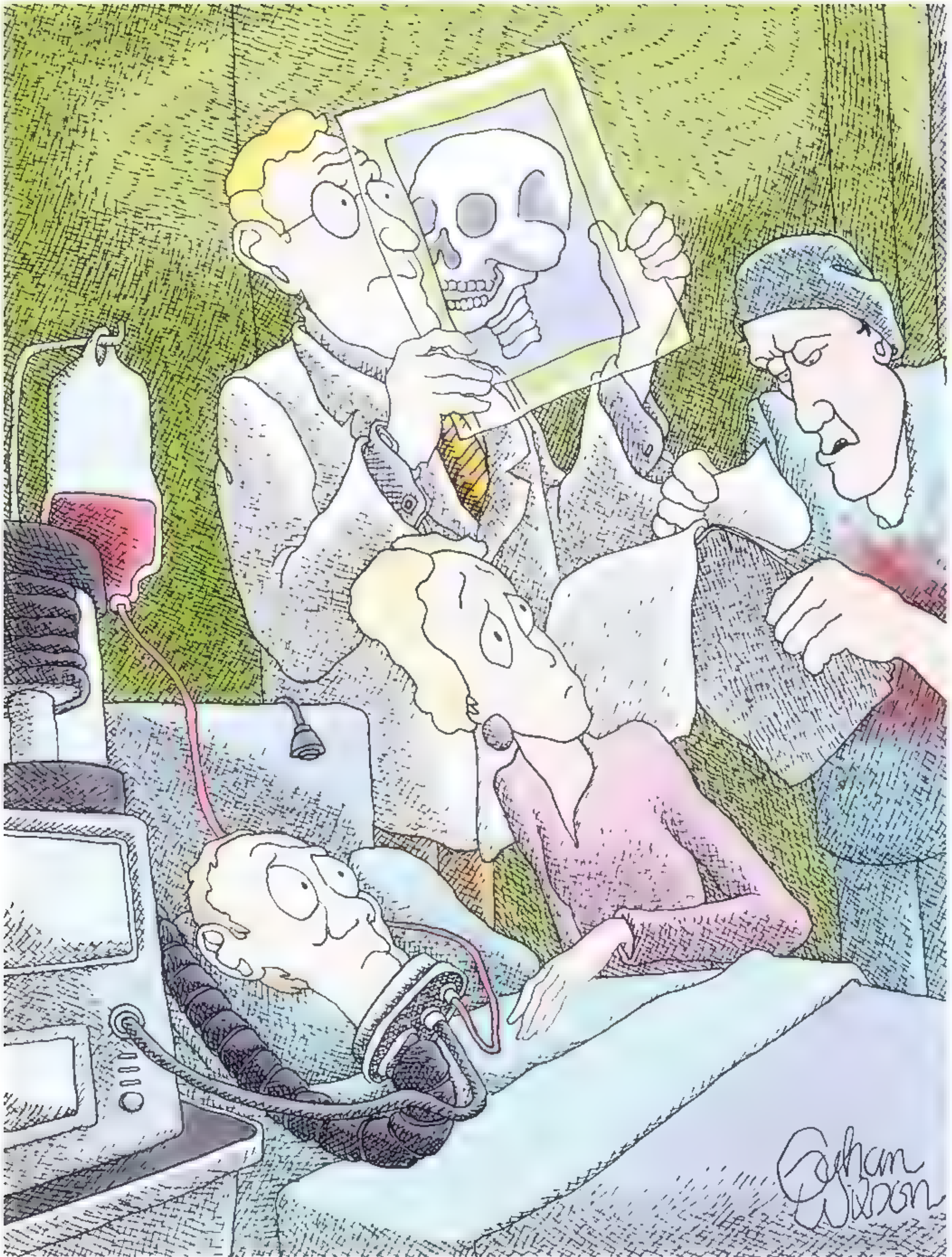
"Witness will refrain from devouring the prosecution!"



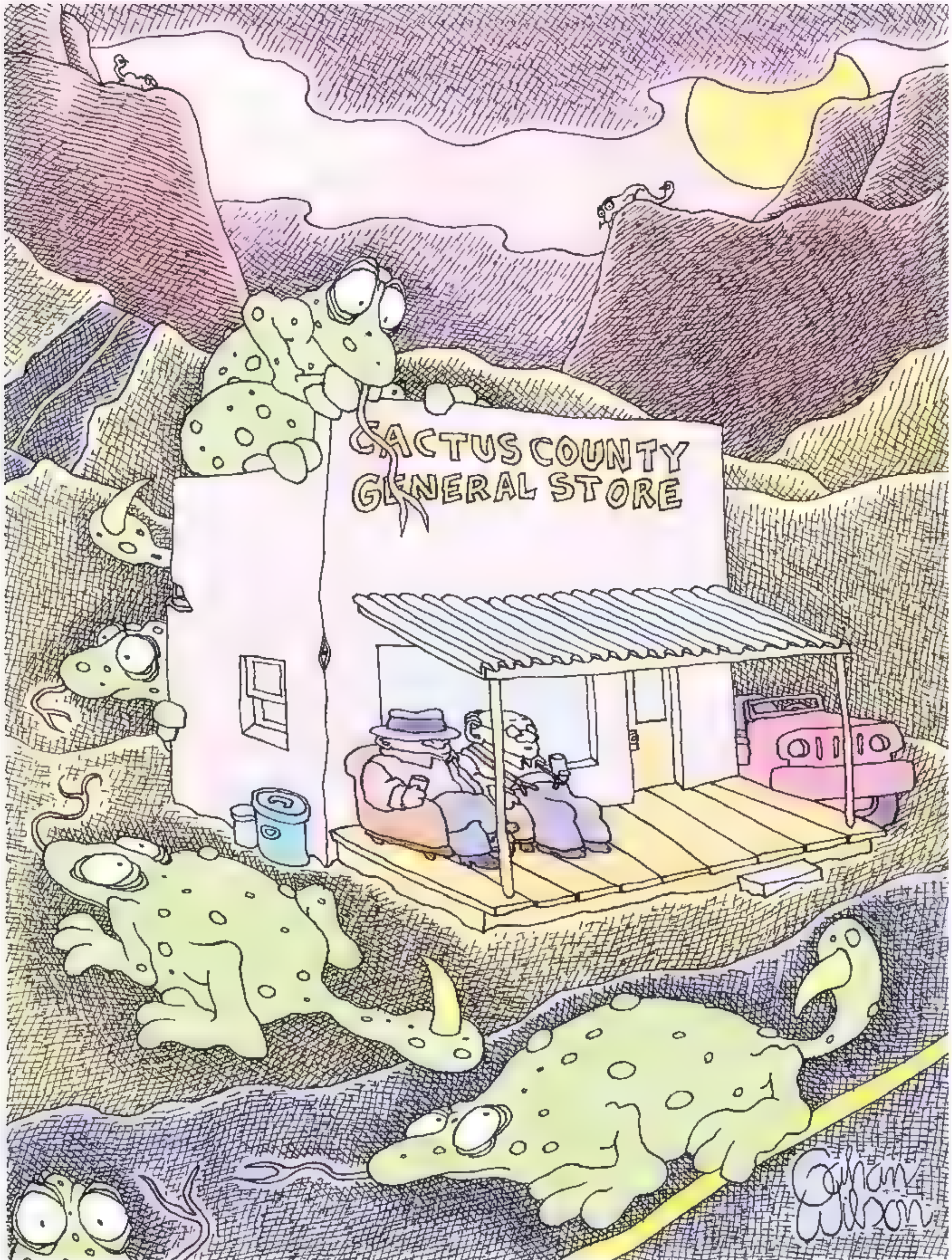
*"I'll concede you've put it behind you, Turner.
But it's still behind you."*



"Don't do anything I wouldn't do!"



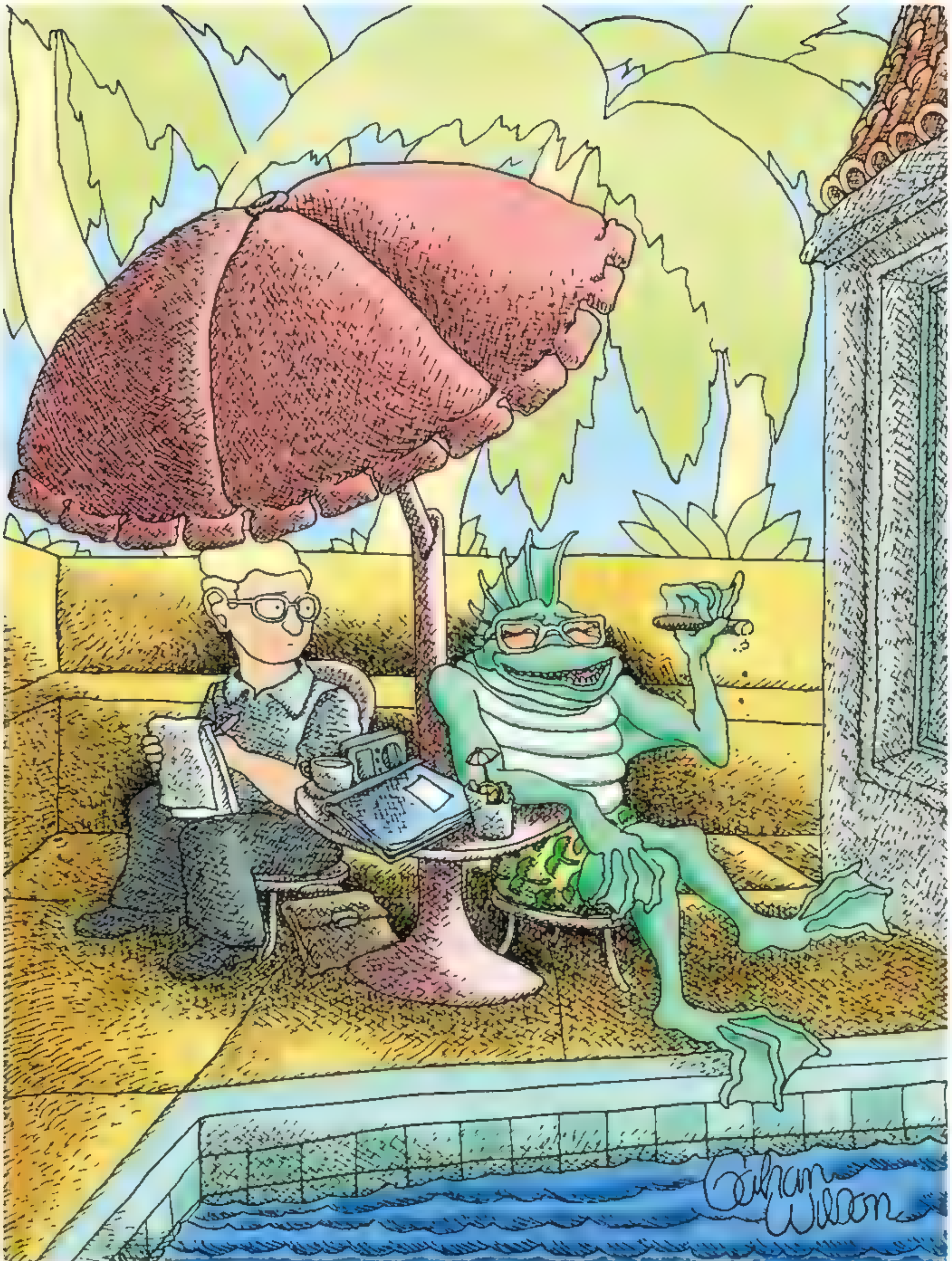
"I think we got all of it."



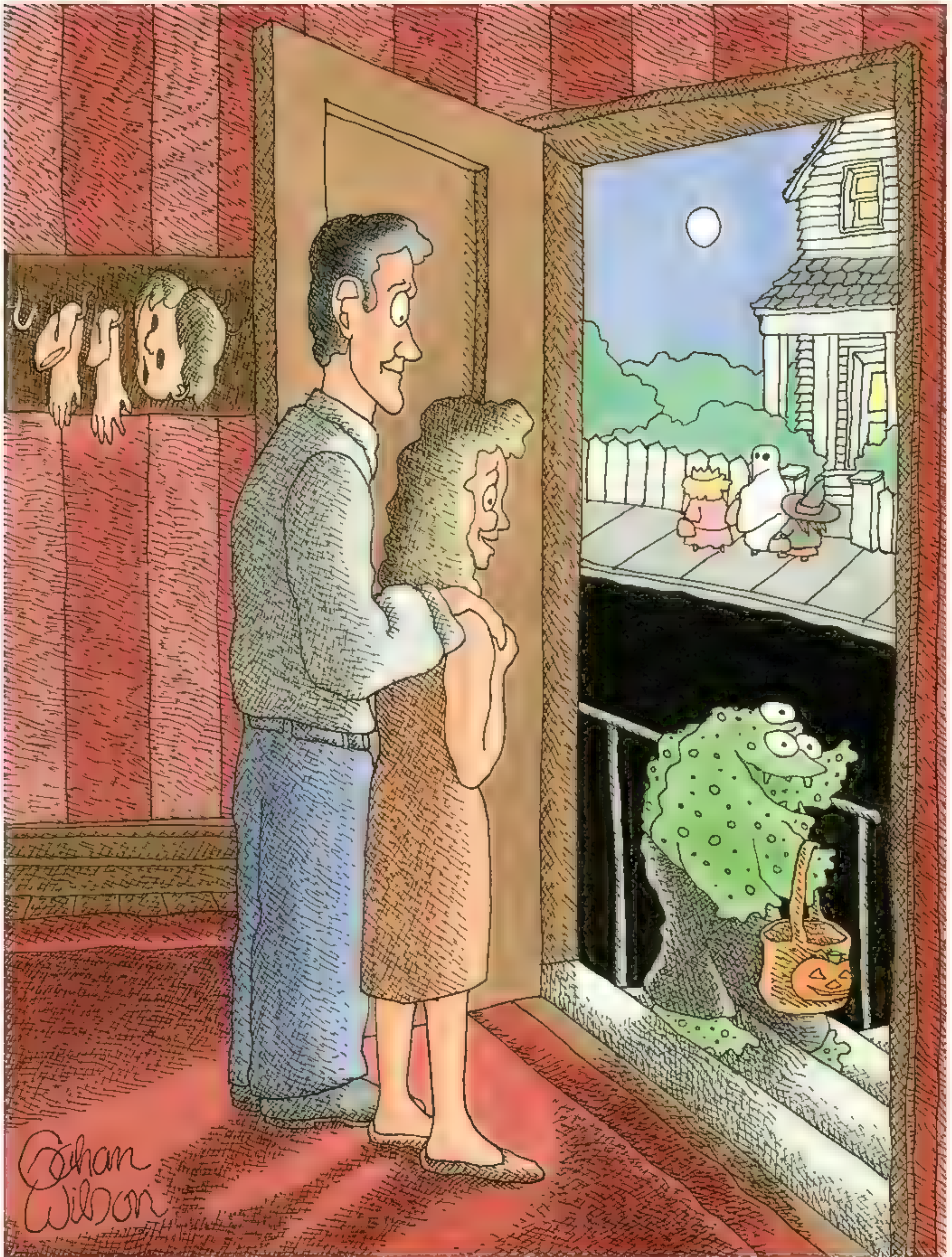
"I understand they're pretty much extinct everywhere else."



*"Looks like this fellow you came across could
be bigger than we thought!"*



"Of course, with someone like me, a swimming pool is pretty much a must."



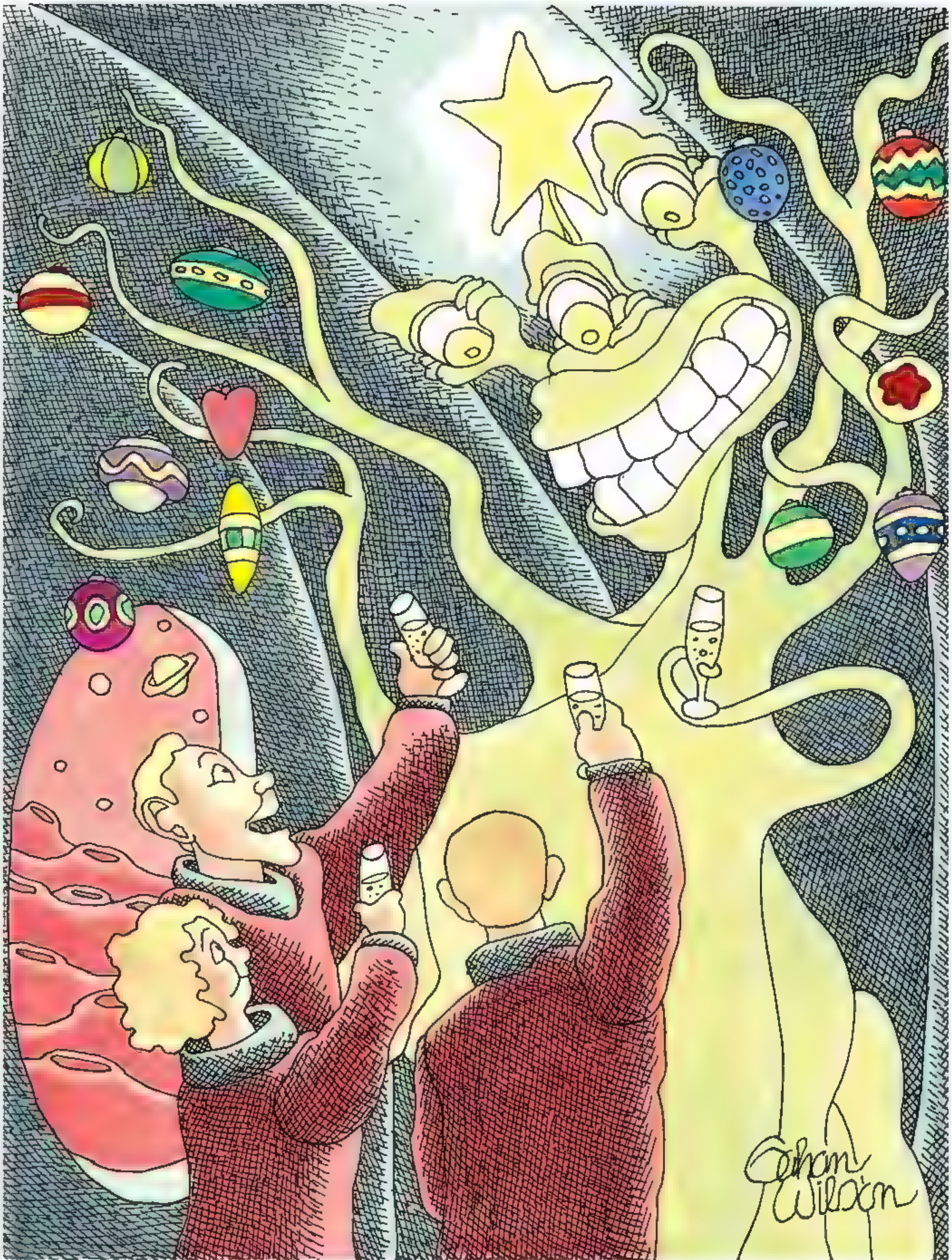
*"It's the one night of the year he can go out without
his mask and costume!"*



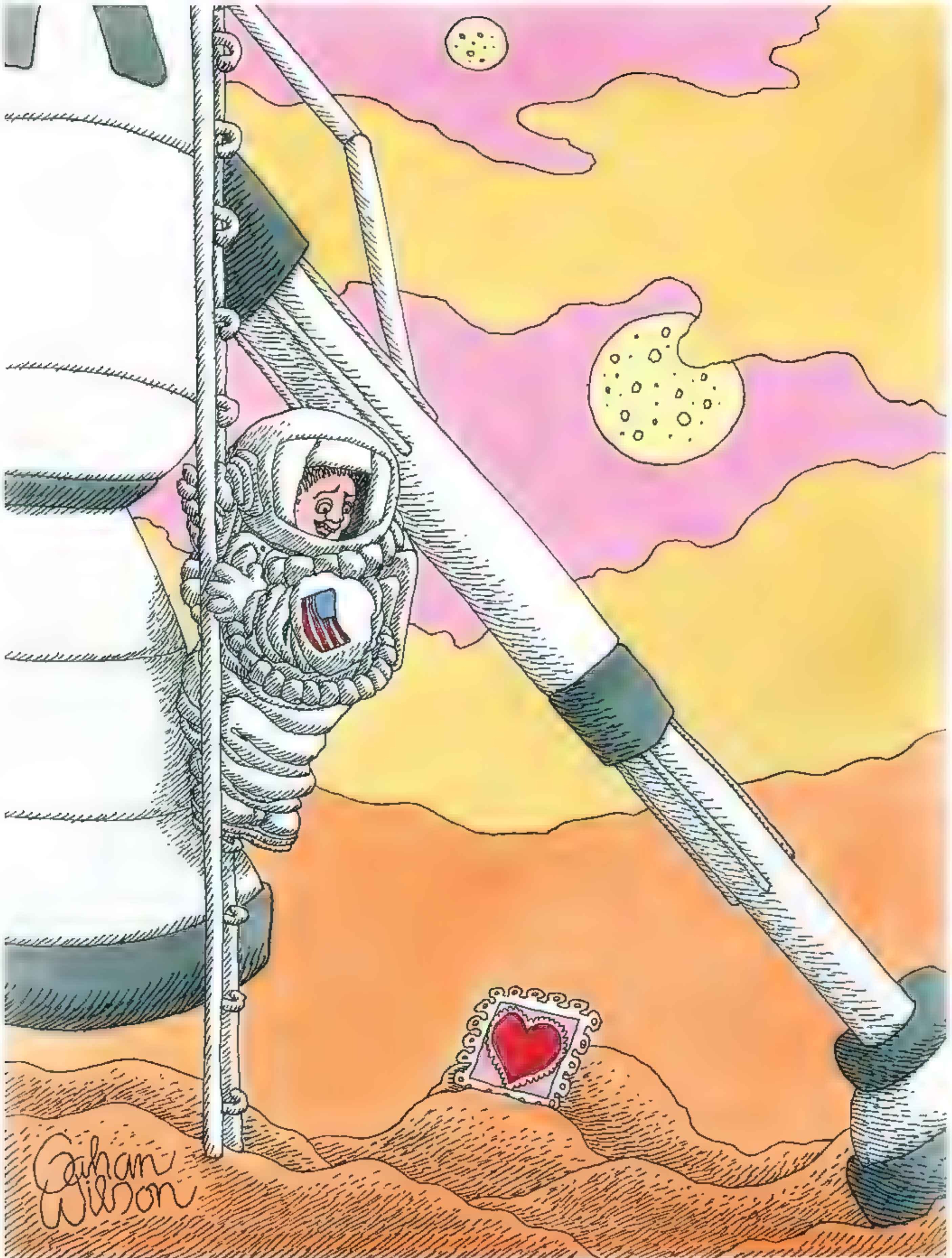
*"I'm so glad that you enjoyed our little dinner
and that you didn't taste the poison!"*



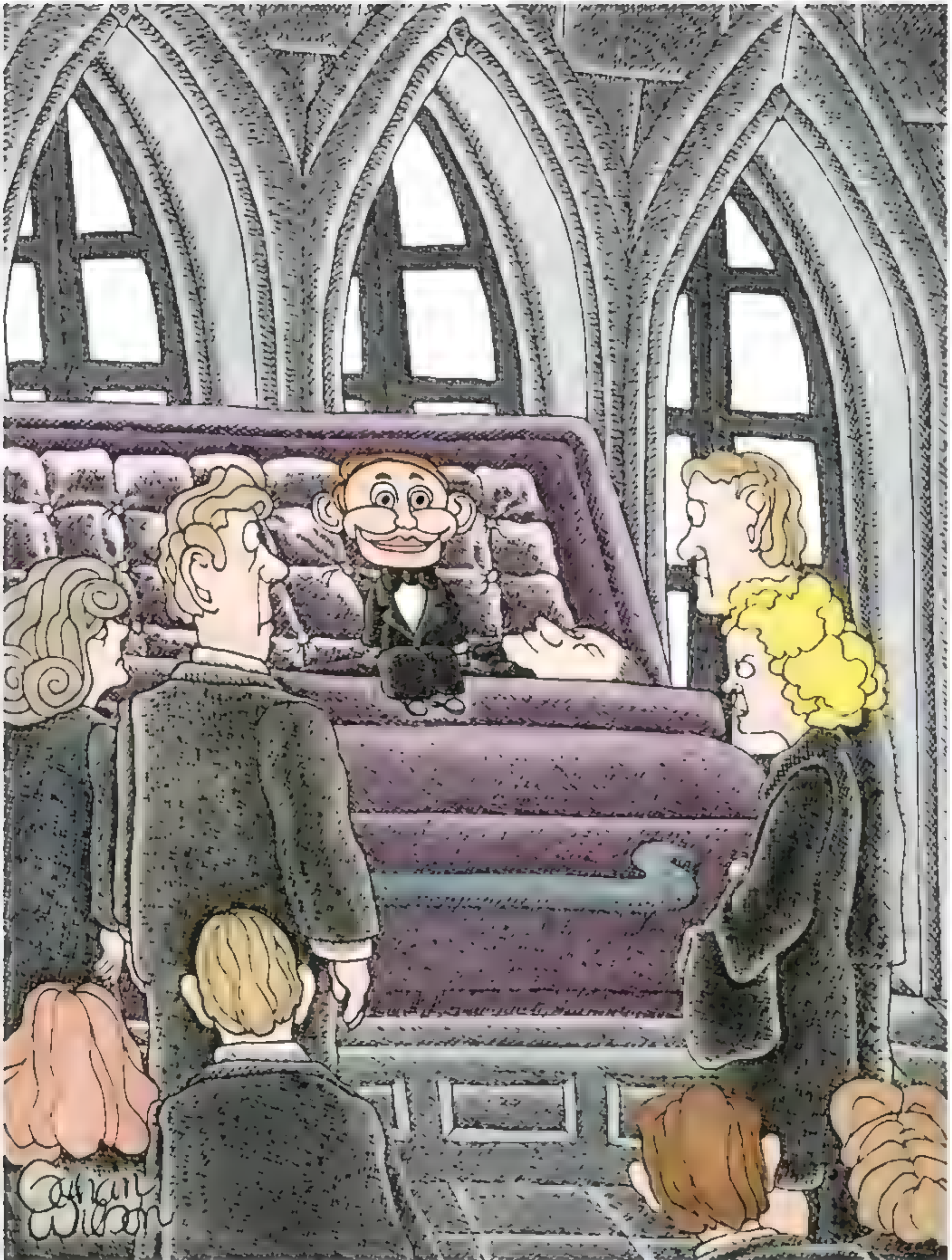
*"Just put one foot directly in front of the other, sir,
and walk in as straight a line as possible."*



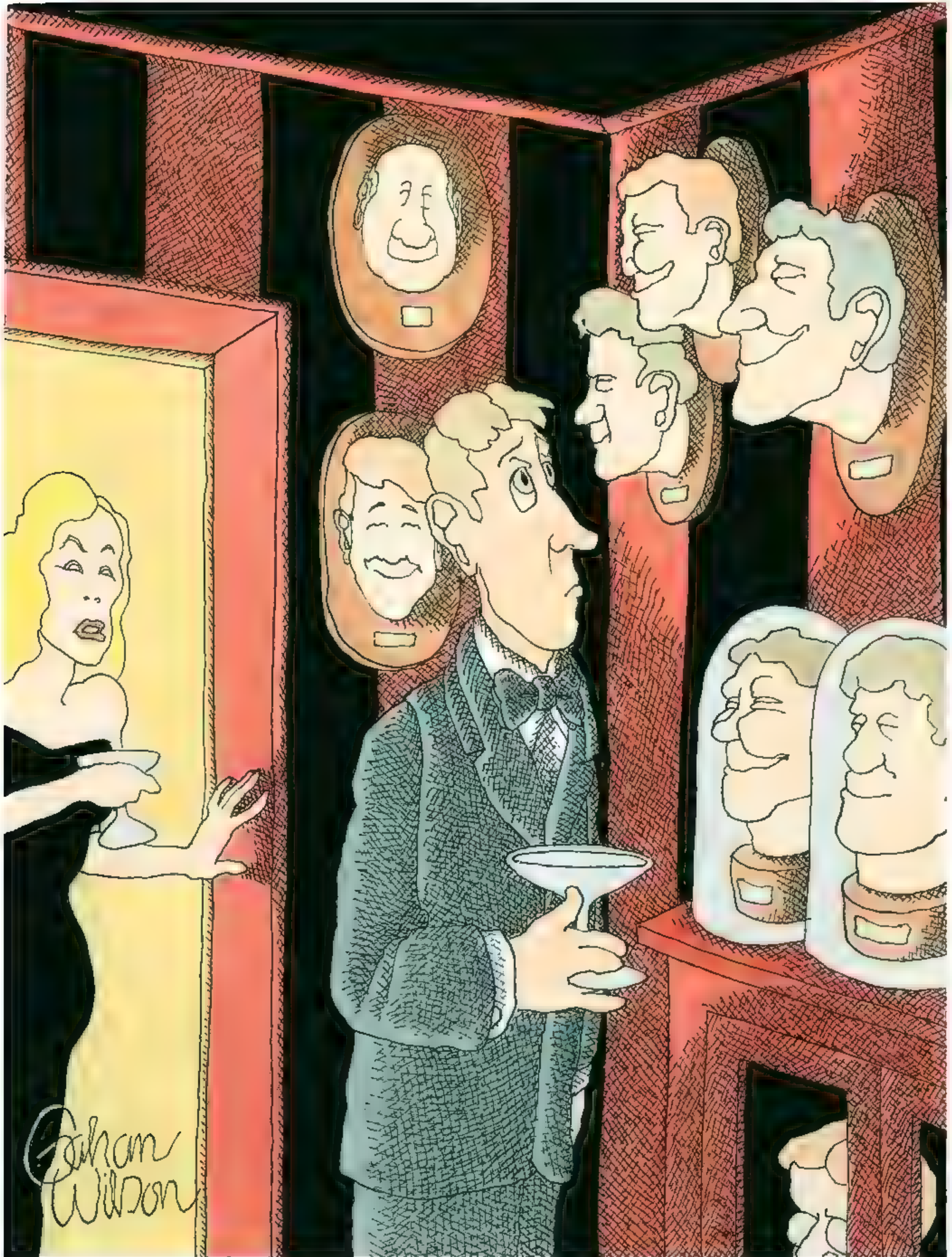
"Here's a toast to N'kzuxo for being our Christmas tree!"



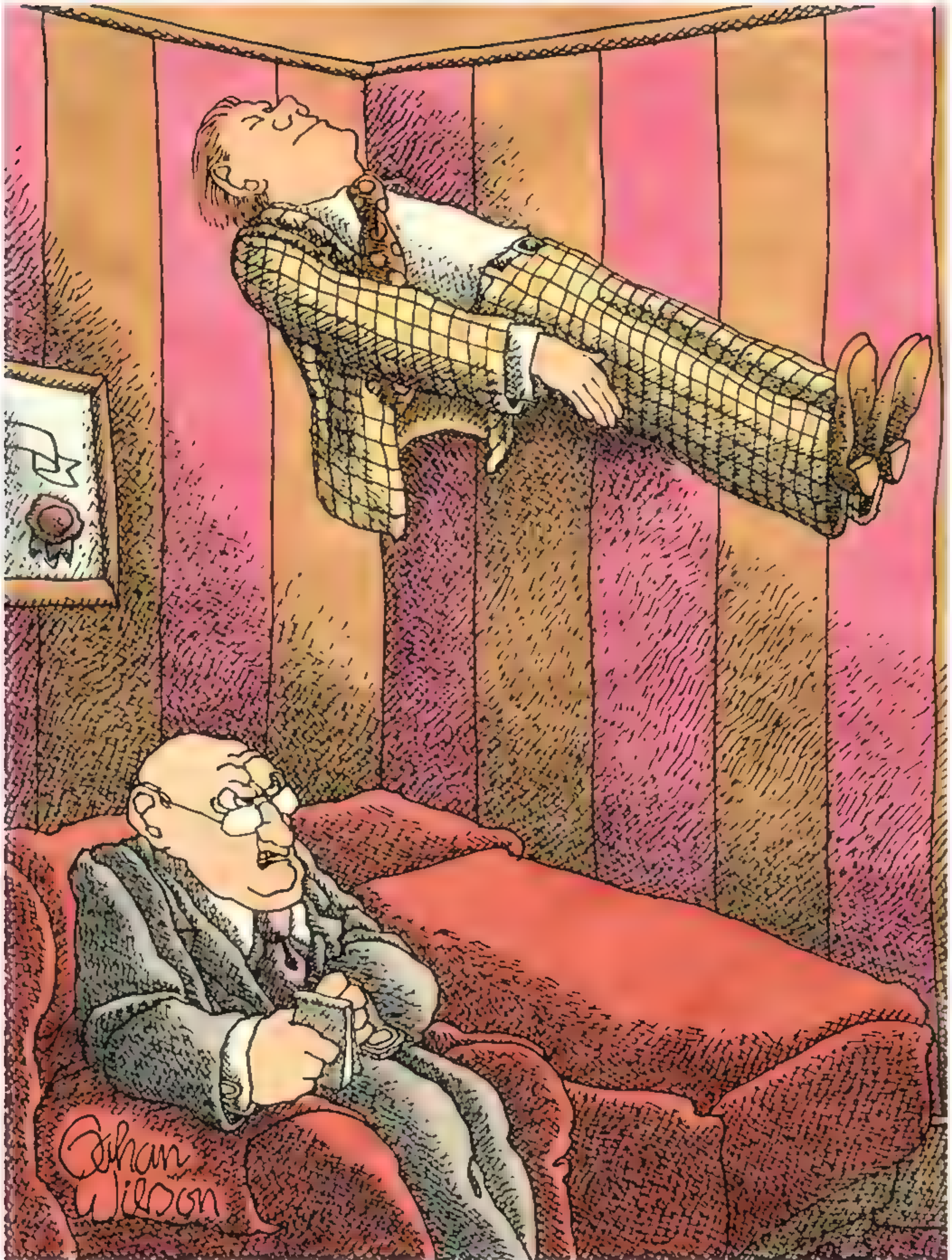
"It's inhabited and they appear to be friendly."



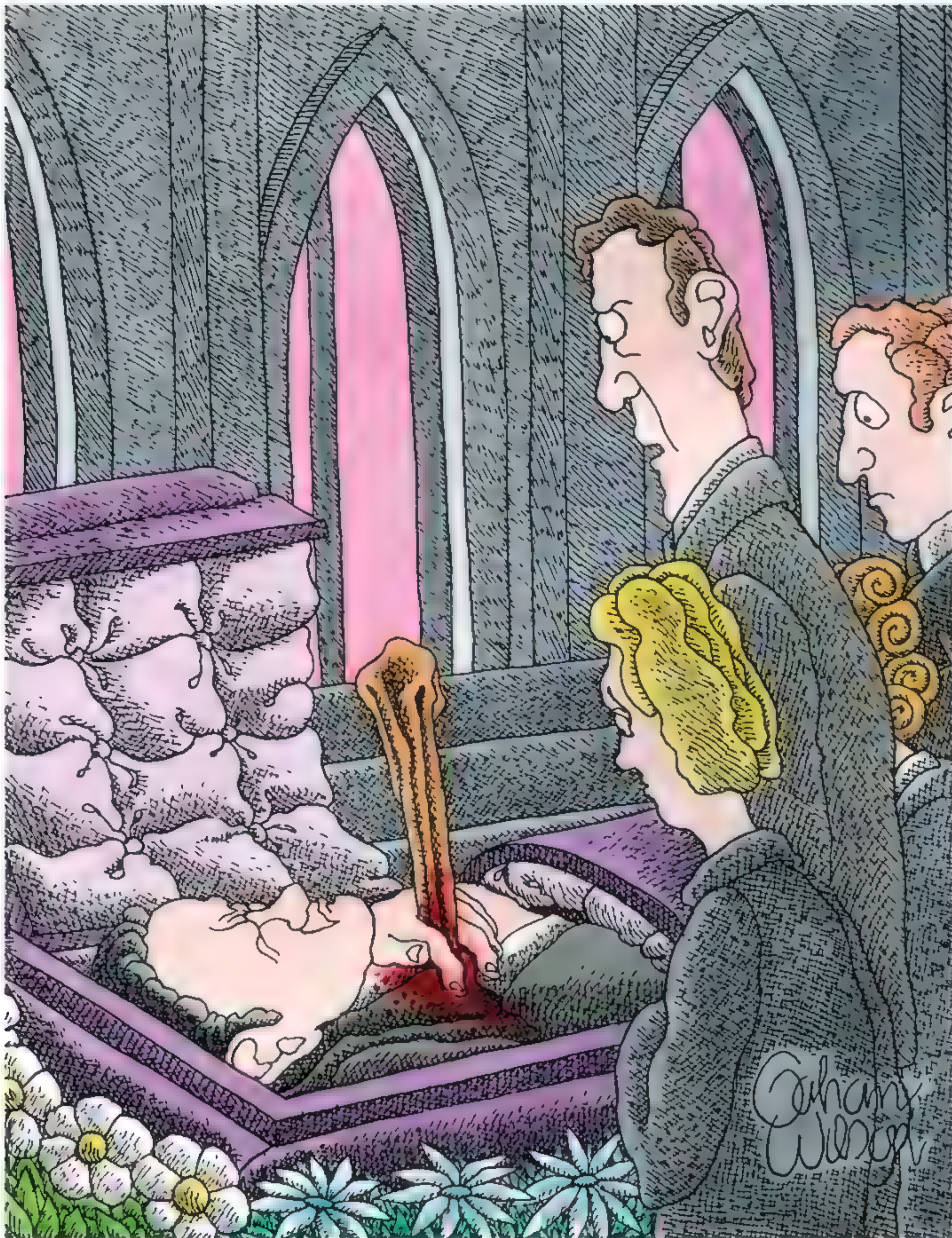
"If that thing says one word, I'm leaving!"



"I thought I told you never to enter this room!"



"Stop trying to creep me out!"



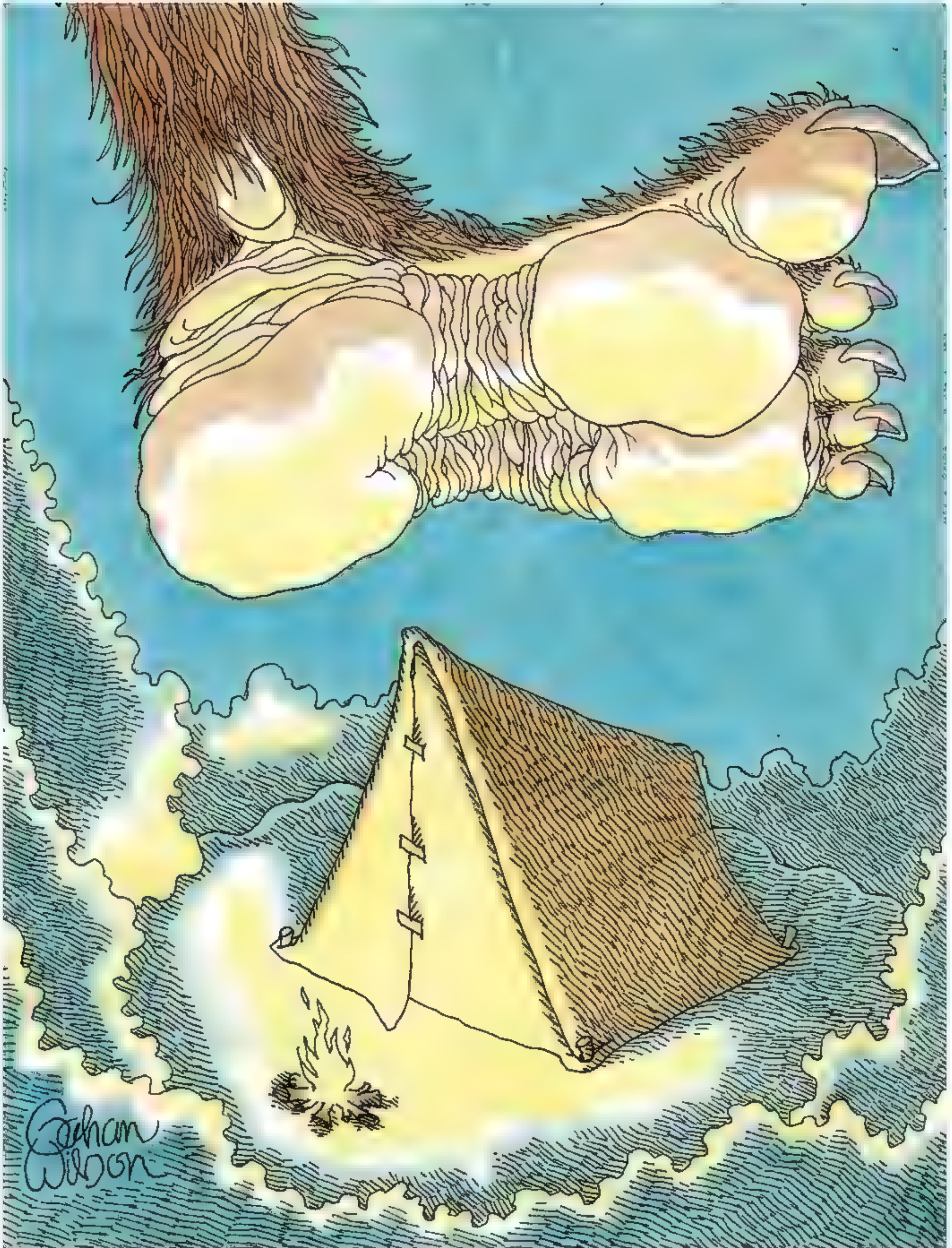
"Who'd have thought old Harry would turn out to be a vampire?"



"I told him that game was too advanced for him!"



"Mommy, Mommy—Skippy's found Daddy!"



"Whatever it is, it seems to be coming closer!"



"Remember how we used to blend in with the snow?"



"This is definitely not going to be good for the economy!"



"I THINK THAT'S
THE LAST OF
THEM!"



GAHAN WILSON

Horror Trio

by Gahan Wilson

APPETIZER

The hypnotic throb of drums filled the room together with the sound of weird, rhythmic chanting and occasional bloodcurdling shrieks. It was easy to imagine some huge barbaric fire flickering on fat tropical leaves, and making the eyes of wild things gleam red and wicked as they crouched watching in the dark. Mingling surrealistically but pleasantly with the drums and chanting, the faint purr of busy traffic rose from Fifth Avenue 30 stories below. When the drums broke off in midvibration, Brett Yardley rose from the couch, conscious that he moved with the lazy grace of a tiger, and turned off his high-fidelity tape machine. Then he smiled with benign manliness at the devastating blonde whose side he had just quit.

"Well, Laura Mae, my dear," he said, his voice deep and resonant, "what did you think of it?"

For an answer she fluttered the lids of her breathtakingly beautiful eyes; little dimples of sensual joy appeared on either side of her delicious lips. Yardley set his firm square jaw a little firmer. By God, he thought exultantly, the magic's working again. Just like it always worked. He always wondered if it would and, by God, it always did. He began to freshen their drinks.

"It is remarkable that so savage a people," he said, observing the sweet trim of Laura Mae's ankles as he bent over the Scotch, "could produce music so subtle and profound." And it was true. He always marveled that the backward louts had hit upon it.

He handed Laura Mae her glass, letting their fingertips touch for a held breath, and then he toasted her with earnest, sincere type admiration showing in his big brown eyes.

"I recorded what we have just heard," he said only barely missing the tone of a travelog narrator, "in the very heart of an almost impenetrable South American jungle. I was crouched in the concealing undergrowth, in constant fear for my life." Which was the solemn truth. He had been absolutely stoned when he had made the bet with Fenton in camp, and then there was that blanked-out period after he set out alone, and then there he was like Tom Swift and his electric tape recorder with those maniacs doing their horrible business within smelling distance of him. Jesus, had he ever sweat blood! But they hadn't spotted him. And so here he was with Laura Mae, as he had been with Maxine, and Joan, and Dot, and all the lovely, lovely others. With the never-fail spell of the recording and the sure fire pitch.

He glanced over at Laura Mae and was pleased to see the expected look of wonderment and awe appearing right on schedule. Her tiny nose, he noticed, tilted up just a fraction when her mouth made a soft O. A charming effect. But he kept his expression grim.

"Yes, my dear," he said, putting his hand on her forearm reassuringly, "they would have killed me if they'd found me."

Her eyes grew bigger than he would have thought possible. He looked away from them and gazed firmly into the middle distance, taking a stolid sip of his drink. All guts, that was him! But restrained.

"Killed me after hideous tortures, my dear," he carried on, putting his glass on the table before him with a sure and gentle motion. Then he took a deep breath and let it out slowly.

"Killed me," he said, "and then eaten me."

Laura Mae gave a marvelous little gasp and he took her hands in his. Sure enough, she had the glazed look.

"Yes, Laura Mae," he said, "they were cannibals. And that music, that strangely haunting sound of drums and chanting voices, was recorded by me as they were in the *actual act of roasting their victim!*"

Sometimes he wondered why the hell the thing always worked, then he figured it was better, maybe, to leave it alone and not bother. I mean, just go ahead and let the voodoo do its stuff, you know?

He stood, tall and strong, and she stood with him, leaning against him dazedly. Together they walked to the player and then, after a long pause during which they exchanged searching looks and reached unspoken agreement, he reached out a bronzed hand to flip the switch and activate the magic music.

She listened, fascinated, as the drumbeats set the air to pounding hypnotically about her, making her skin feel warm and stroked, causing her blood to simmer in her veins. She thrilled at the eerie chantings which caused her breath to come in small, excited gasps, and made her feel alive and truly wakened for the first time in her life.

Yardley felt the ecstatic trembles running through her luscious frame and gloated. Don't tell me there isn't one hell of a lot to this magic bit, he crowed to himself, happily gathering the woman's eager body into his arms. What I mean is those natives weren't just sitting around while that victim roasted, buddy. Not on your sweet life they weren't. Not with that ever-loving music goading their glands, making the thick, sweet lust in them glow and roar, and —

Suddenly, unexpectedly, Laura Mae jerked like a hooked fish. Yardley opened his eyes in amazement

just in time to see her head loll loosely back. Abruptly she became limp and too heavy for him to hold. She slid from him to thump in a crazy heap on the floor.

It took him a beat before he really saw the dark man who had been standing behind her and another before he could make any sense out of the mean-looking club the man was swinging at him. Then there was a wild splotch of pain which stopped almost before it started, and then bright lights everywhere, and then nothing.

The dark man pocketed his club, which was carved to represent one of his gods, and knelt to tie Laura Mae and Yardley with lengths of rope which he had thoughtfully brought along. He was rough with Yardley, but gentle with the woman. It was not her fault, after all, that this long pig had stolen and misused the music of his people. He locked her in Yardley's wardrobe closet only after making sure she would have sufficient ventilation.

Then he went to the phone and dialed. While he waited he adjusted the lapel of his Ivy League jacket and brushed some lint off one of its sleeves. The local costumes were interesting, he reflected, but awkward to wear. He scratched absent-mindedly at a scarification mark on his cheek. When he heard the answering click he spoke without preamble:

"He's the man, all right, and he had the music, so we've tracked it down at last. But it seems a shame," the dark man said, "not to use it just one more time before we burn the tape. What say you bring the girls over? I'll have things ready."

Then he put the receiver back on its hook, eyed Yardley's meaty bulk in a speculative way, and headed for the kitchen to check on the size of the oven.

THE BOOK

Doren's fingers found the black book before the rest of him. They had cruised, almost independently, hopping, groping, from book to book after the manner of the fingers of collectors the world over, touching each book tentatively, but with skill, and when they felt the odd, almost furry spine of the black book they had stopped quickly as an owl's gaze halts on a mouse. He looked down at the book his fingers had discovered for him and carefully concealed any outward signs of the electric thrill which ran through

him. Casually, studiously so, he took the black book from its place and languidly began to turn its pages.

His eyes and fingers worked together now; taking in the peculiar softness of the skin pages, noting the heavy black type deeply indented into its sienna-splotched, ocher background, touching and seeing the barbaric woodcuts of astrological signs and magic circles and imps and dark angels.

Doren's heart began to beat with a thudding intensity which frightened him. He almost believed

it might be audible to others. He could imagine its thumping carrying across the empty shop where the ears of old Steiner would perk and listen. But Steiner's back remained solidly turned and Doren gave a strained smile at the fantasy.

He closed the book and carefully slipped it back where he had found it. His head buzzed with schemes and confusion. A large black cat jumped soundlessly onto the stall and Doren stroked it, thankful for the interruption. He felt the cat's back arch under his hand and he attempted to consider his situation coolly.

It was the sort of situation which never happened. People who didn't collect books, or who collected them only a little, always felt that they really might come across a Shakespearean folio, or a Gutenberg Bible, or, Doren swallowed, a black book such as this. But it never happened. Old Steiner and his fellow bookdealers saw to that.

He glanced down at the book again, tore his eyes from it, and selected another one at random. The cat mewed pettishly and he stroked it again to silence it.

It wouldn't take a Steiner to spot the black book, thought Doren. This was no subtlety, no delicately flawed wonder, no first edition panted after only by certain esoterics. There was nothing obscure about this treasure. Its feel, its look, even the smell of it broadcast its singularity. The most ignorant clerk would have been sophisticated enough to at least strongly suspect the black book's value.

He put down the book he'd been toying with, he couldn't even remember its title, and risked another inspection of his find. Its absurd, its altogether ridiculous price was lightly penciled on its end page: one dollar and 75 cents. He almost gasped when he recognized Steiner's European seven with its cross-bar. That eliminated the idea of a blunder by a part-time assistant. The old man had priced it himself.

Had he been drunk? It wasn't in character. But how on earth could the old man have come to make such a gigantic error? How could he have given the black book its grotesque price and condemned it to a common stall?

Would he give challenge when Doren went over to buy the book? It seemed likely. The hideous mistake would be seen at once, a plausible explanation would be hastily presented, and the book would be out of Doren's hands forever. Forever because Doren knew he would never be able to afford any-

thing like its true cost. It was an item only for richly endowed libraries and millionaire collectors. The thing must be practically priceless.

Doren turned to a carefully cut magic circle. Each minute detail was sharp and clear. It was important, he reflected wryly, not to make mistakes when you drew a magic circle. He had seen plenty of them before, of course. Every *grimoire*, every warlock's spell book, contained at least one of them. The idea of the circle was central to the diabolist's art. But this one was, in some tingling way, different from any of the others. This one looked as if it might actually *work*.

He closed his eyes and opened them again, like a man with a bad headache, and the shop seemed to rush in at him. It was as if he had been away in some far off place for an immeasurable time and only just returned. He looked down dazedly at the cat and it looked up at him with green expectation in its eyes.

Doren felt suddenly tired. He could not cope with the plots and plans which flashed through his mind. He saw himself gathering an armful of books and taking them up to Steiner, shuffling them before the old man's eyes like a magician with a pack of cards, burying the black book in a flurry of unimportant others. He imagined himself waiting until a rush of customers were at the dealer's desk, and then showing the book hurriedly into view, giving him money and going before the old man could properly take in what had happened. He seriously considered just slipping the book into his pocket and leaving without paying.

He sighed. He could do any of these things, but in his present peculiar state of exhaustion he felt he wouldn't be up to the simplest of them. For the first time in his life he found himself a convinced fatalist. If it was to happen, it would happen, he decided; if it wasn't, then it wouldn't.

He walked up to Steiner's desk with the black book in his hand. Doren noticed that he looked thin and haggard, as if he had been through a bad illness. Perhaps the dealer was sick. That might explain it.

"Well, Mr. Doren? You found something you want?"

"Yes," said Doren. He put the book on the desk and pushed it toward the old man.

Steiner opened it without curiosity and noted the price. "One dollar and 75 cents, please," he said, and when Doren had given him the exact change, he said, "Thank you, Mr. Doren."

Doren took the black book, knew it was now his, and was torn between the impulse to shout in triumph and, oddly, to cry in sorrow. He nodded at the old man and walked unsteadily through the shop. He paused at the door and blinked at the sunlight. It was too bright. It seemed unfriendly. He hunched his shoulders and went down the street, patting and stroking the book with his hands.

Steiner watched him leave. When Doren had passed out of sight the old man turned to look at the cat which perched calmly on the stall where the black book had been.

"All right," said Steiner wretchedly. "It's gone. Now you go."

The cat smiled broadly at the old man. It was a horrible smile. It was bigger by half than the cat's small head. The teeth were thick, white, and pointed like a shark's. The cat leaped gracefully to the floor and, still grinning hugely, left the shop in stalk of Doren.

Then the old man sagged in his chair, alone, completely alone, with his bleak awareness that he had gained no reprieve, after all.

PHYLLIS

After this nice gentleman catches my eye in the bar mirror a couple of times and sees I don't flinch away in spite of he's giving me The Look, he comes over, kind of unsteady, and asks me would I mind if he bought me a drink, Miss, and I tell him It's a free country and I will have a double Scotch, thank you. So pretty soon we're talking away like anything you could want to mention and in spite of what we are talking about is not concerned with sex, directly, his hand keeps brushing my knee. But I don't jerk away, only sort of shift over so as to let him know I am not stuck up but I am not the kind of girl with which you can rush things, if you know what I mean.

It turns out his name is Eddie and he is a salesman in from Chicago here for the convention. He says as how they usually have the convention in Chicago but he is just as glad they are having it here this year as it gives him a chance to get away.

After we have a few more drinks he asks me do I live around here and I tell him I live just next door in the third floor back with Phyllis. He says he wouldn't think a pretty girl like me would want to bother with a roommate and I tell him there is no bother at all with Phyllis and we have been together ever since Daddy died.

Eddie says we sound like a regular team and I say we are, kind of, but we each live our own lives. He asks me Is she like you? and I say Oh heavens no, we are altogether different and in fact it would be hard to imagine two girls who are more different than Phyllis and me. Take like I am always going around all the time, like in bars and like this, but

Phyllis she just stays up in the apartment practically for all day.

He asks me What does she do up there? and I say Oh, she just sits up in her corner all the time and knits. Eddie asks me What does she knit? and I say Oh, she just knits, is all.

We have a couple of more drinks and Eddie asks how about we buy a bottle and go up to my place and sort of talk where it's private, if Phyllis wouldn't mind, and I say Sure, why not?

So he gets a bottle and we head up the stairs with him all the time asking me You sure Phyllis won't mind? and me telling him she doesn't mind at all. We get into the living room and I take off my hat and Eddie fixes a couple of drinks at the sink and then he sits down on the sofa beside me and hands me my drink but I put it on the table and say I have had enough for awhile and he looks at me and he guesses so has he and puts his drink on the table next to mine and we start doing this and that on the sofa.

Well we have hardly got started when he gets this worried expression on his face and says No offense, Honey, but what is that funny musty smell? I tell him Oh, it isn't anything, and put my arms around his neck, but he still looks worried and asks me No, but what is it? So I say For Pete's sake, it is only Phyllis, and he sits up and says What do you mean?

Well what can I do but sit up and tell him Well that is the way she smells, is all, and it isn't that she isn't clean or anything and we even tried perfume once but it only made it worse. It is not her fault that Phyllis smells that way.

Eddie has some of his drink and asks me Is she sick or something? and I say No she has been that way ever since I met her when Daddy died and left me an orphan and without her I honestly don't know what would have happened to me so if she smells a little it is hardly for me to complain.

I can see it will be No Go for a while so I turn on the radio with some nice quiet music and Eddie fixes a couple more drinks and eventually we get back to fooling around on the sofa again but we haven't hardly more than just got going when so help me up he sits with that worried expression on his face all over.

Well what is the matter now? I ask him, and he says What was that noise for cryeye? Boy I am getting more than just a little tired with him but I say Forget the noise and come back to Mama, but he says It came from over there, and he points to Phyllis' door.

I can tell you I am getting plenty exasperated with him but I sit up and say It is only Phyllis so ignore her. He says It sounded like somebody scratching on the door with a bunch of dry twigs for cryeye, what is she doing scratching on the damn door? I tell him How should I know? And it certainly doesn't take much to get your mind off of certain things after all the big eyes down at the bar. He says Don't get mad, Baby, it's only that it kind of startled me is all.

So I tell him All right, then, just forget it and come back here and let's have some fun, but he says he thinks he could use another drink and he goes over and fixes one but all the time he keeps his eyes

on Phyllis' door. Then he starts to come back to the sofa but then he stops by the end table and looks down and points to the floor and asks What the hell is that?

What the hell is what? I say, and I am by now feeling very irritated with him altogether. That stuff, he says, still pointing at the floor. So I lean over the arm of the sofa, and look down and say Oh that is only some of Phyllis' knitting.

He says It don't look like any knitting I ever saw. He says It looks like a bunch of fluffed-up dirty Kleenex. Then he bends down and touches it and when he straightens up it has all stuck to him except where it's still stuck to the floor.

For God's sake, he says, It's all sticky! I tell him Of course it is, you dope, if it wasn't sticky it wouldn't work. He looks at me and his face goes pale and he drops his drink and begins to pull at Phyllis' knitting to try to get it off him but it won't break and he just gets himself more tangled up.

Well, I say to him, I had hoped we could have had some fun but have it your way, and I walk over to Phyllis' door and open it and out she comes.

I am hardly ready for bed by the time she is all done with Eddie and there is only that mummy thing she leaves. Well, I say to her, I hope you enjoyed him as he was a complete waste of time as far as I'm concerned. But I can tell from the bored way she cleans her forelegs with her fangs that she also considers he was pretty much a washout. †

The Manuscript of Doctor Arness

by Gahan Wilson

Before I do what I must do, I suppose it would be a good idea to leave behind an explanation. I generally detest suicide notes. They tend to be pathetic, often mawkish monuments. But then, most suicides themselves are pathetic and mawkish—the puerile resolution to a neurotic stupidity.

I do love life. Perhaps not as passionately as some men do, or say they do, but I love it. I am not pleased at the idea of giving it up. If I could discover any reasonable alternative I would not, even now, give it up. But there is no alternative.

My main reason for writing this is to leave behind a warning. Because I am brilliant, what I have done is brilliant, and ordinary men are hardly likely to have the requisite ingenuity to blunder into anything like my present predicament; but there are many other brilliant men in this world and some of them, even now, may be engaged in an experiment similar to my own, unaware of where it is leading them. I address myself to this elite.

It is ironic that I have been pushed into suicide because of an attempt to prolong my life. Like most thinking individuals, I have always been galled by the tiny span allotted to us by a supposedly beneficent providence. A man has barely attained a state of mature efficiency before he finds himself advancing rapidly into his decline. It is infuriating to contemplate what a Newton or a Kepler, or a Beethoven or a Dante could have accomplished if his creative years had been extended. Imagine, to take an example, how much richer our artistic heritage would be had Cézanne been given a mere decade more of productive existence.

The stretching out of old age has my sympathy, but not much of my interest. If I had lived to be a

tottering ancient, I suppose I would be as eager for a few more blurry years as they appear to be, but I do not see any particular value for the race as a whole in the prolongation of an individual long after he has passed anything that could be described as a fully operative condition. If the present triumphs of geriatrics continue, we shall probably find ourselves wandering among vast legions of the vague elderly. I would not for the world deny them their extra years, but I cannot see that it renders the rest of us any more than a sentimental service.

No, it is the extension of men at their working best that obsesses me. I use the word advisedly, for it is, with me, truly an obsession. Since childhood I have been consumed with this single ambition. It's quite possible that the germ of the concept first came to me wrapped in a nursery tale. In any case, it has been my driving motive for as long as I can remember.

I am, as I said, brilliant. I am not boasting, for it isn't something I've accomplished, but merely a quality with which I was born. I did, however, make full use of it, and managed to crowd a sizable amount of learning into a very short period of time, establishing, in passing, a quantity of records in various educational establishments. I felt, you see, that I was working against the clock. I wanted to cheat the time trap as much as I possibly could.

So it was that I began the serious phase of my investigations while still a comparatively young man. Despite this initial advantage, I was in my mid-30s before I had completed the fundamental structure of my theory, and well into my 40s before I was in a position to bring it to the actual physical test.

My technique was a radical departure from the previous approaches to the problems of aging, all

of which may be satisfactorily grouped under two rough headings: the propping-up school, which employs preventive medicines, vitamins, exercises, and so on; and the patching-up school, which makes use of reparative operations, stimulants, artificial supplements or replacements to damaged organs, and the rest. My aim was to bring about a fundamental reorientation of the body's molecular structure. I intended to alter its metabolic operations by manipulating the tiny components that control it. This I accomplished by means of an electrochemical process, the details of which are given in the notebook that I shall leave behind to accompany this brief note.

I proceeded in the classical manner, testing my theories on animals under controlled conditions, taking copious notes and records on their reactions. I began with mice, went on to guinea pigs, and worked the final experiments on a group of chimpanzees named, unromantically enough, One, Two and Three.

The effect of my treatment is cumulative. It is a slow transformation, a gradual alteration of the body, working from the large to the small, so that the small can work on the large. There is no discernible change during the first phase, but after a period of time, depending on the eccentricities of the particular animal's construction, new elements become evident. Their mood becomes buoyant and their health is dramatically improved. One interesting, and unanticipated, bonus is that all congenital defects disappear. Chimpanzee Two, for example, had a slightly stunted arm that he could move only with some difficulty. After three weeks, that arm was fully grown and completely operative. One by one, the predictions of my theory checked out, all on schedule, all completely fulfilling or exceeding expectation.

To say that I was pleased with the results of these experiments is to profoundly understate the case. The dream of my life was proving itself before my eyes; I had achieved the power to work the miracle for which I had been born. I, myself, not some distant inheritor of theory, could become, for all intents and purposes, immortal.

It was at this point that I erred, and the error was precipitation. But can you blame me? The years were passing, each one, it seemed, faster than the year before. Freedom from time was in my grasp; I could not

resist the temptation to reach out and take it. I was guilty of undue haste, but, even now, I cannot blame myself too much.

I began to apply my treatment to myself. As with my animals, there was no observable reaction at first, but then I became aware of a growing peace and contentment, and I saw, clearly, that I was much improved in every bodily function. I had worn thick glasses. In four weeks I dispensed with them altogether, having no further need of them. My digestion had been faulty. Now it was perfect. I could hardly believe the image in my mirror. It was like some incredible before and after ad in the back pages of a magazine. I positively radiated health.

By now the lack of aging had become evident in my animals. The mice, which would have died long ago under normal conditions, were all alive and thriving. Each of the creatures was totally unaltered since its first transformation. They could be killed, of course, by any normal means, but if they were only wounded, their rate of recovery was staggering. A scalpel cut that would ordinarily take weeks to mend would heal in a matter of days. My triumph was past all belief. These few glorious days are, still, worth all the rest. Not many men taste perfect victory.

Now I must proceed to the less happy events that followed.

It was my habit to occasionally run my mice through mazes to determine their reaction time. At the start of the experiment, when the initial alteration was effecting itself, their increased abilities had afforded me much joy. Now, to my growing apprehension, I observed that the period of time they took to complete their chore was unmistakably graphing up. I examined them carefully. I dissected a few to see if anything had gone wrong with their internal organs. They were all in flawless condition, but still, each day, they took a little longer to find their way through the maze. In a month I discovered, to my great discomfort, that they took twice as long to find their way from the beginning to the end.

By this time a similar phenomenon had begun to manifest itself in my guinea pigs, and even in One, Two and Three. There was nothing, not the slightest thing, wrong with any of them except that they needed more and more time to accomplish any task.

In another month, the condition of my mice had become positively grotesque. At their peak they had averaged about a minute and a half to complete their

trek through the maze; now they all required approximately two hours. It was not that they had become sluggish, in the ordinary sense of the word. They did not lie down or take any periods of rest at all. They worked at their task steadily, even intelligently, but they lingered agonizingly over each and every move. It was the same with all their activities. They ate, they played, they fought and made love, but one's patience was worn thin watching them at any of it, because it took them such a damnably long time to move from one part of it to the next. I can only compare the effect to that of a slow-motion movie.

This slowness, if I may use a contradiction in terms, accelerated. Each of the various groups of animals proceeded in proportion to its own metabolism. By the time the guinea pigs had achieved the condition I have just described in regard to the mice, the mice were moving so slowly that it required an extended period of observation to determine whether they were moving at all. I attached an ink marker to the tail of one mouse so that the creature would leave a thin black line behind itself as it moved. After one full week, the tiny trail was only one and one quarter inches long. Yet all of my mice remained in the best of health. Their coats were still glossy, and their eyes sparkled with undimmed enthusiasm. The only trouble was that to a casual observer in my laboratory they would have appeared to be absolutely inert.

As the reader will have surmised, I was not exempt from this slowing process. Subjectively, I was not aware of it at all, but by timing my actions against an external check, such as the rotations of my watch's hands, I could see only too well that my movements had become increasingly slower. The alteration continued in the same snowballing fashion as with my pets, and now I no longer need anything as delicate as a clock to remind myself of my condition. I cannot strike a match fast enough to ignite it. By counting the sunrises and sunsets through the window,

I determined that it took me nine days to arrange my typewriter so that I could type this note.

I determined to end my life after what might seem a trivial enough incident. I gave Three a banana and observed that it took him an entire afternoon to peel it. He looked so contented, so blissfully unaware of his snail-paced condition, that I began to laugh at him. My laughter became hysterical, and I ended by crying. I have no idea how long ago this happened, as I have lost all track of time, ordinary time. It has become a foreign thing to me.

I can see no point in becoming a comical object. One, Two and Three now look like so many stuffed monkeys and I, without any doubt, would also come to resemble a particularly successful example of the taxidermist's art, were I to allow myself to survive. I have no intention of doing so. I shall now take the gun, which I have placed beside my typewriter, and blow out my brains with it. I wonder how long it will take me to do it? As I said, the situation is not without iron

* * *

Thus ends the manuscript of Doctor Arness. The last page remains, as you can see for yourself in the exhibit, rolled in the platen of his typewriter. The placement of the typewriter in relation to the gun, the table, the chair, and to Doctor Arness himself is exactly the same as when he and the objects were discovered in his laboratory. Although Doctor Arness appears to be—to use his tragic description—"stuffed," he is not. He is alive, in good health, and he is moving. His index finger, even now, is actually approaching the final "y" in "irony," although at a speed that can be measured only with the most delicate of instruments. Doctor Arness is now 250 years old.

The animals referred to in his manuscript are also all alive and well, and may be seen in the Hall of Mammals. Attractive models of chimpanzees One, Two and Three have been created, and they are available, in various sizes, at the Museum Curio Shop. †

The Sea Was Wet As Wet Could Be

by Gahan Wilson

I felt we made an embarrassing contrast with the open serenity of the scene around us. The pure blue of the sky was unmarked by a single cloud or bird, and nothing stirred on the vast stretch of beach except ourselves. The sea, sparkling under the freshness of the early-morning sun, looked invitingly clean. I wanted to wade into it and wash myself, but I was afraid I would contaminate it.

We are a contamination here, I thought. We're like a group of sticky bugs crawling in an ugly little crowd over polished marble. If I were God and looked down and saw us, lugging our baskets and our silly, bright blankets, I would step on us and squash us with my foot.

We should have been lovers or monks in such a place, but we were only a crowd of bored and boring drunks. You were always drunk when you were with Carl. Good old, mean old Carl was the greatest little drink pourer in the world. He used drinks like other types of sadists use whips. He kept beating you with them until you dropped or sobbed or went mad, and he enjoyed every step of the process.

We'd been drinking all night, and when the morning came, somebody, I think it was Mandie, got the great idea that we should all go out on a picnic. Naturally, we thought it was an inspiration, we were nothing if not real sports, and so we'd packed some goodies, not forgetting the liquor, and we'd piled into the car, and there we were, weaving across the beach, looking for a place to spread our tacky banquet.

We located a broad, low rock, decided it would serve for our table and loaded it with the latest in plastic chinaware, a haphazard collection of food and a quantity of bottles.

Someone had packed a tin of Spam among the other offerings, and when I saw it, I was suddenly overwhelmed with an absurd feeling of nostalgia. It reminded me of the War and of myself soldier boying up through Italy. It also reminded me of how long ago the whole thing had been and how little I'd done of what I'd dreamed I'd do back then.

I opened the Spam and sat down to be alone with it and my memories, but it wasn't to be for long. The kind of people that run with people like Carl don't like to be alone, ever, especially with their memories, and they can't imagine that anyone else might, at least now and then, have a taste for it.

My rescuer was Irene. Irene was particularly sensitive about seeing people alone, because being alone had several times nearly produced fatal results for her. Being alone and taking pills to end the being alone.

"What's wrong, Phil?" she asked.

"Nothing's wrong," I said, holding up a forkful of the pink Spam in the sunlight. "It tastes just like it always did. They haven't lost their touch."

She sat down on the sand beside me very carefully, so as to avoid spilling the least drop of what must have been her millionth Scotch.

"Phil," she said, "I'm worried about Mandie. I really am. She looks so unhappy!"

I glanced over at Mandie. She had her head thrown back and she was laughing uproariously at some joke Carl had just made. Carl was smiling at her with his teeth glistening and his eyes deep down, dead as ever.

"Why should Mandie be happy?" I asked. "What, in God's name, has she got to be happy about?"

"Oh, Phil," said Irene. "You pretend to be such an awful cynic. She's *alive*, isn't she?"

I looked at her and wondered what such a statement meant, coming from someone who'd tried to do herself in as earnestly and as frequently as Irene had. I decided that I did not know and that I would probably never know. I also decided I didn't want any more of the Spam. I turned to throw it away, doing my bit to litter up the beach, and then I saw them.

They were far away, barely bigger than two dots, but you could tell there was something odd about them, even then.

"We've got company," I said.

Irene peered in the direction of my point.

"Look, everybody," she cried, "we've got company!"

Everybody looked, just as she had asked them to.

"What the hell is this?" asked Carl. "Don't they know this is my private property?" And then he laughed.

Carl had fantasies about owning things and having power. Now and then he got drunk enough to have little flashes of believing he was king of the world.

"You tell 'em, Carl!" said Horace.

Horace had sparkling quips like that for almost every occasion. He was tall and bald and he had a huge Adam's apple and, like myself, he worked for Carl. I would have felt sorrier for Horace than I did if I hadn't had a sneaky suspicion that he was really happier when groveling. He lifted one scrawny fist and shook it in the direction of the distant pair.

"You guys better beat it," he shouted. "This is private property!"

"Will you shut up and stop being such an ass?" Mandie asked him. "It's not polite to yell at strangers, dear, and this may damn well be *their* beach, for all you know."

Mandie happens to be Horace's wife. Horace's children treat him about the same way. He busied himself with zipping up his windbreaker, because it was getting cold and because he had received an order to be quiet.

I watched the two approaching figures. One was tall and bulky, and he moved with a peculiar, swaying gait. The other was short and hunched into himself, and he walked in a fretful, zigzag line beside his towering companion.

"They're heading straight for us," I said.

The combination of the cool wind that had come up and the approach of the two strangers had put a damper on our little group. We sat quietly and watched them coming closer. The nearer they got, the odder they looked.

"For heaven's sake!" said Irene. "The little one's wearing a square hat!"

"I think it's made of paper," said Mandie, squinting, "folded newspaper."

"Will you look at the mustache on the big bastard?" asked Carl. "I don't think I've ever seen a bigger bush in my life."

"They remind me of something," I said.

The others turned to look at me.

The Walrus and the Carpenter . . .

"They remind me of the Walrus and the Carpenter," I said.

"The who?" asked Mandie.

"Don't tell me you never heard of the Walrus and the Carpenter?" asked Carl.

"Never once," said Mandie.

"Disgusting," said Carl. "You're an uncultured bitch. The Walrus and the Carpenter are probably two of the most famous characters in literature. They're in a poem by Lewis Carroll in one of the Alice books."

"In *Through the Looking Glass*," I said, and then I recited their introduction:

*"The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand;
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand . . ."*

Mandie shrugged.

"Well, you'll just have to excuse my ignorance and concentrate on my charm," she said.

"I don't know how to break this to you all," said Irene, "but the little one does have a handkerchief."

We stared at them. The little one did, indeed, have a handkerchief, a huge handkerchief, and he was using it to dab at his eyes.

"Is the little one supposed to be the Carpenter?" asked Mandie.

"Yes," I said.

"Then it's all right," she said, "because he's the one that's carrying the saw."

"He is, so help me, God," said Carl. "And, to make the whole thing perfect, he's even wearing an apron."

"So the Carpenter in the poem has to wear an apron, right?" asked Mandie.

"Carroll doesn't say whether he does or not," I said, "but the illustrations by Tenniel show him wearing one. They also show him with the same square jaw and the same big nose this guy's got."

"They're goddamn doubles," said Carl. "The only thing wrong is that the Walrus isn't a walrus, he just looks like one."

"You watch," said Mandie. "Any minute now, he's going to sprout fur all over and grow long fangs."

Then, for the first time, the approaching pair noticed us. It seemed to give them quite a start. They stood and gaped at us and the little one furtively stuffed his handkerchief out of sight.

"We can't be as surprising as all that!" whispered Irene.

The big one began moving forward then, in a hesitant, tentative kind of shuffle. The little one edged ahead, too, but he was careful to keep the bulk of his companion between himself and us.

"First contact with the aliens," said Mandie, and Irene and Horace giggled nervously. I didn't respond. I had come to the decision that I was going to quit working for Carl, that I didn't like any of these people about me, except, maybe, Irene, and that these two strangers gave me the honest creeps.

Then the big one smiled, and everything was changed.

I've worked in the entertainment field, in advertising and in public relations. This means I have come in contact with some of the prime charm boys and girls in our proud land. I have become, therefore, not only a connoisseur of smiles, I am a being equipped with numerous automatic safeguards against them. When a talcumed smoothy comes at me with his brilliant ivories exposed, it only shows he's got something he can bite me with, that's all.

But the smile of the Walrus was something else.

The smile of the Walrus did what a smile hasn't done for me in years—it melted my heart. I use the cornball phrase very much on purpose. When I saw his smile, I knew I could trust him. I felt in my marrow that he was gentle and sweet and had nothing but the best intentions. His resemblance to the Walrus in the poem ceased being vaguely chilling and

became warmly comical. I loved him as I had loved the teddy bear of my childhood.

"Oh, I say," he said, and his voice was an embarrassed boom, "I do hope we're not intruding!"

"I dare say we are," squeaked the Carpenter, peeping out from behind his companion.

"The, um, fact is," boomed the Walrus, "we didn't even notice you until just back then, you see."

"We were talking, is what," said the Carpenter.

*They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand...*

"About sand?" I asked.

The Walrus looked at me with a startled air.

"We were, actually, now you come to mention it."

He lifted one huge foot and shook it so that a little trickle of sand spilled out of his shoe.

"The stuff's impossible," he said. "Gets in your clothes, tracks up the carpet."

"Ought to be swept away, it ought," said the Carpenter.

*"If seven maids with seven mops
Swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose," the Walrus said,
"That they could get it clear?"*

"It's too much!" said Carl.

"Yes, indeed," said the Walrus, eyeing the sand around him with vague disapproval, "altogether too much."

Then he turned to us again and we all basked in that smile.

"Permit me to introduce my companion and myself," he said.

"You'll have to excuse George," said the Carpenter, "as he's a bit of a stuffed shirt, don't you know?"

"Be that as it may," said the Walrus, patting the Carpenter on the flat top of his paper hat, "this is Edward Farr, and I am George Tweedy, both at your service. We are, um, both a trifle drunk, I'm afraid."

"We are, indeed. We are that."

"As we have just come from a really delightful party, to which we shall soon return."

"Once we've found the fuel, that is," said Farr, waving his saw in the air. By now he had found the courage to come out and face us directly.

"Which brings me to the question," said Tweedy. "Have you seen any *driftwood* lying about the premises? We've been looking high and low and we can't seem to find *any* of the blasted stuff."

"Thought there'd be piles of it," said Farr, "but all there is is sand, don't you see?"

"I would have sworn you were looking for oysters," said Carl.

Again, Tweedy appeared startled.

"O Oysters, come and walk with us!"
The Walrus did beseech.

"Oysters?" he asked. "Oh, no, we've got the oysters. All we lack is the means to cook 'em."

"'Course, we could use a few more," said Farr, looking at his companion.

"I suppose we *could*, at that," said Tweedy thoughtfully.

"I'm afraid we can't help you fellows with the driftwood problem," said Carl, "but you're more than welcome to a drink."

There was something unfamiliar about the tone of Carl's voice that made my ears perk up. I turned to look at him and then had difficulty covering up my astonishment.

It was in his eyes. For once, for the first time, they were really friendly.

I'm not saying Carl had fishy eyes, blank eyes—not at all. On the surface, that is. On the surface, with his eyes, with his face, with the handling of his entire body, Carl was a master of animation and expression. From sympathetic, heartfelt warmth, all the way to icy rage, and on every stop in between, Carl was completely convincing.

But only on the surface. Once you got to know Carl, and it took a while, you realized that none of it was really happening. That was because Carl had died, or been killed, long ago. Possibly in childhood. Possibly he had been born dead. So, under the actor's warmth and rage, the eyes were always the eyes of a corpse.

But now it was different. The friendliness here was genuine, I was sure of it. The smile of Tweedy, of the Walrus, had performed a miracle. Carl had risen from his tomb. I was in honest awe.

"*Delighted*, old chap!" said Tweedy.

They accepted their drinks with obvious pleasure, and we completed the introductions as they

sat down to join us. I detected a strong smell of fish when Tweedy sat down beside me, but, oddly, I didn't find it offensive in the least. I was glad he'd chosen me to sit by. He turned and smiled at me and my heart melted a little more.

It soon turned out that the drinking we'd done before had only scratched the surface. Tweedy and Farr were magnificent boozers, and their gusto encouraged us all to follow suit.

We drank absurd toasts and were delighted to discover that Tweedy was an incredible raconteur. His specialty was outrageous fantasy: wild tales involving incongruous objects, events and characters. His invention was endless.

"*The time has come*," the Walrus said,
"To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—
Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
And whether pigs have wings."

We laughed and drank, and drank and laughed, and I began to wonder why in hell I'd spent my life being such a gloomy, moody son of a bitch, been such a distrustful and suspicious bastard, when the whole secret of everything, the whole core secret, was simply to enjoy it, to take it as it came.

I looked around and grinned, and I didn't care if it was a foolish grin. Everybody looked all right, everybody looked swell, everybody looked better than I'd ever seen them look before.

Irene looked happy, honestly and truly happy. She, too, had found the secret. No more pills for Irene, I thought. Now that she knows the secret, now that she's met Tweedy, who's given her the secret, she'll have no more need of those goddamn pills.

And I couldn't believe Horace and Mandie. They had their arms around each other, and their bodies were pressed close together, and they rocked as one being when they laughed at Tweedy's wonderful stories. No more nagging for Mandie, I thought, and no more cringing for Horace, now they've learned the secret.

And then I looked at Carl, laughing and relaxed and absolutely free of care, absolutely unchilled, finally, at last, after years of—

And then I looked at Carl again.

And then I looked down at my drink, and then I

looked at my knees, and then I looked out at the sea, sparkling, clean, remote and impersonal.

And then I realized it had grown cold, quite cold, and that there wasn't a bird or a cloud in the sky.

*The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky:
No birds were flying overhead—
There were no birds to fly.*

That part of the poem was, after all, a perfect description of a lifeless earth. It sounded beautiful at first, it sounded benign. But then you read it again and you realized that Carroll was describing barrenness and desolation.

Suddenly Carl's voice broke through and I heard him say:

"Hey, that's a hell of an idea, Tweedy! By God, we'd love to! Wouldn't we, gang?"

The others broke out in an affirmative chorus and they all started scrambling to their feet around me. I looked up at them, like someone who's been awakened from sleep in a strange place, and they grinned down at me like loons.

"Come on, Phil!" cried Irene.

Her eyes were bright and shining, but it wasn't with happiness. I could see that now.

*"It seems a shame," the Walrus said,
"To play them such a trick..."*

I blinked my eyes and stared at them, one after the other.

"Old Phil's had a little too much to drink!" cried Mandie, laughing. "Come on, old Phil! Come on and join the party!"

"What party?" I asked.

I couldn't seem to get located. Everything seemed disorientated and grotesque.

"For Christ's sake, Phil," said Carl. "Tweedy and Farr, here, have invited us to join their party. There're no more drinks left, and they've got plenty!"

I set my plastic cup down carefully onto the sand. If they would just shut up for a moment, I thought, I might be able to get the fuzz out of my head.

"Come along, sir!" boomed Tweedy jovially. "It's only a pleasant walk!"

"O Oysters, come and walk with us!"

The Walrus did beseech.

*"A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk,
Along the briny beach..."*

He was smiling at me, but the smile didn't work anymore.

"You cannot do with more than four," I told him.

"Um? What's that?"

*"We cannot do with more than four,
To give a hand to each."*

"I said, 'You cannot do with more than four.'"

"He's right, you know," said Farr, the Carpenter.

"Well, um, then," said the Walrus, "if you feel you really *can't* come, old chap..."

"What, in Christ's name, are you all talking about?" asked Mandie.

"He's hung up on that goddamn poem," said Carl. "Lewis Carroll's got the yellow bastard scared."

"Don't be such a party pooper, Phil!" said Mandie.

"To hell with him," said Carl. And he started off, and all the others followed him. Except Irene.

"Are you sure you really don't want to come, Phil?" she asked.

She looked frail and thin against the sunlight. I realized there really wasn't much of her and that what there was had taken a terrible beating.

"No," I said. "I don't. Are you sure you want to go?"

"Of course I do, Phil."

I thought of the pills.

"I suppose you do," I said. "I suppose there's really no stopping you."

"No, Phil, there isn't."

And then she stooped and kissed me. Kissed me very gently, and I could feel the dry, chapped surface of her lips and the faint warmth of her breath.

I stood.

"I wish you'd stay," I said.

"I can't," she said.

And then she turned and ran after the others.

I watched them growing smaller and smaller on the beach, following the Walrus and the Carpenter. I watched them come to where the beach curved around the bluff, and watched them disappear behind the bluff.

I looked up at the sky. Pure blue. Impersonal.

"What do you think of this?" I asked it.
Nothing. It hadn't even noticed.

*"Now, if you're ready. Oysters dear,
We can begin to feed."
"But not on us!" the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue,
"After such kindness, that would be
A dismal thing to do!"*

A dismal thing to do.

I began to run up the beach, toward the bluff. I stumbled now and then, because I had had too much to drink. Far too much to drink. I heard small shells crack under my shoes, and the sand made whipping noises.

I fell, heavily, and lay there gasping on the beach. My heart pounded in my chest. I was too old for this sort of footwork. I hadn't had any real exercise in years. I smoked too much and I drank too much. I did all the wrong things. I didn't do any of the right things.

I pushed myself up a little and then I let myself down again. My heart was pounding hard enough to frighten me. I could feel it in my chest, frantically pumping, squeezing blood in and spurting blood out.

Like an oyster pulsing in the sea.

"Shall we be trotting home again?"

My heart was like an oyster.

I got up, fell up, and began to run again, weaving widely, my mouth open and the air burning my throat. I was coated with sweat, streaming with it, and it felt icy in the cold wind.

"Shall we be trotting home again?"

I rounded the bluff and then I stopped and stood swaying, and then I dropped to my knees.

The pure blue of the sky was unmarked by a single bird or cloud, and nothing stirred on the whole vast stretch of the beach.

*But answer came there none—
And this was scarcely odd, because . . .*

Nothing stirred, but they were there. Irene and Mandie and Carl and Horace were there, and four others, too. Just around the bluff.

"We cannot do with more than four . . ."

But the Walrus and the Carpenter had taken two trips.

I began to crawl toward them on my knees. My heart, my oyster heart, was pounding too hard to allow me to stand.

The other four had had a picnic, too, very like our own. They, too, had plastic cups and plates, and they, too, had brought bottles. They had sat and waited for the return of the Walrus and the Carpenter.

Irene was right in front of me. Her eyes were open and stared at, but did not see, the sky. The pure blue uncluttered sky. There were a few grains of sand in her left eye. Her face was almost clear of blood. There were only a few flecks of it on her lower chin. The spray from the huge wound in her chest seemed to have traveled mainly downward and to the right. I stretched out my arm and touched her hand.

"Irene," I said.

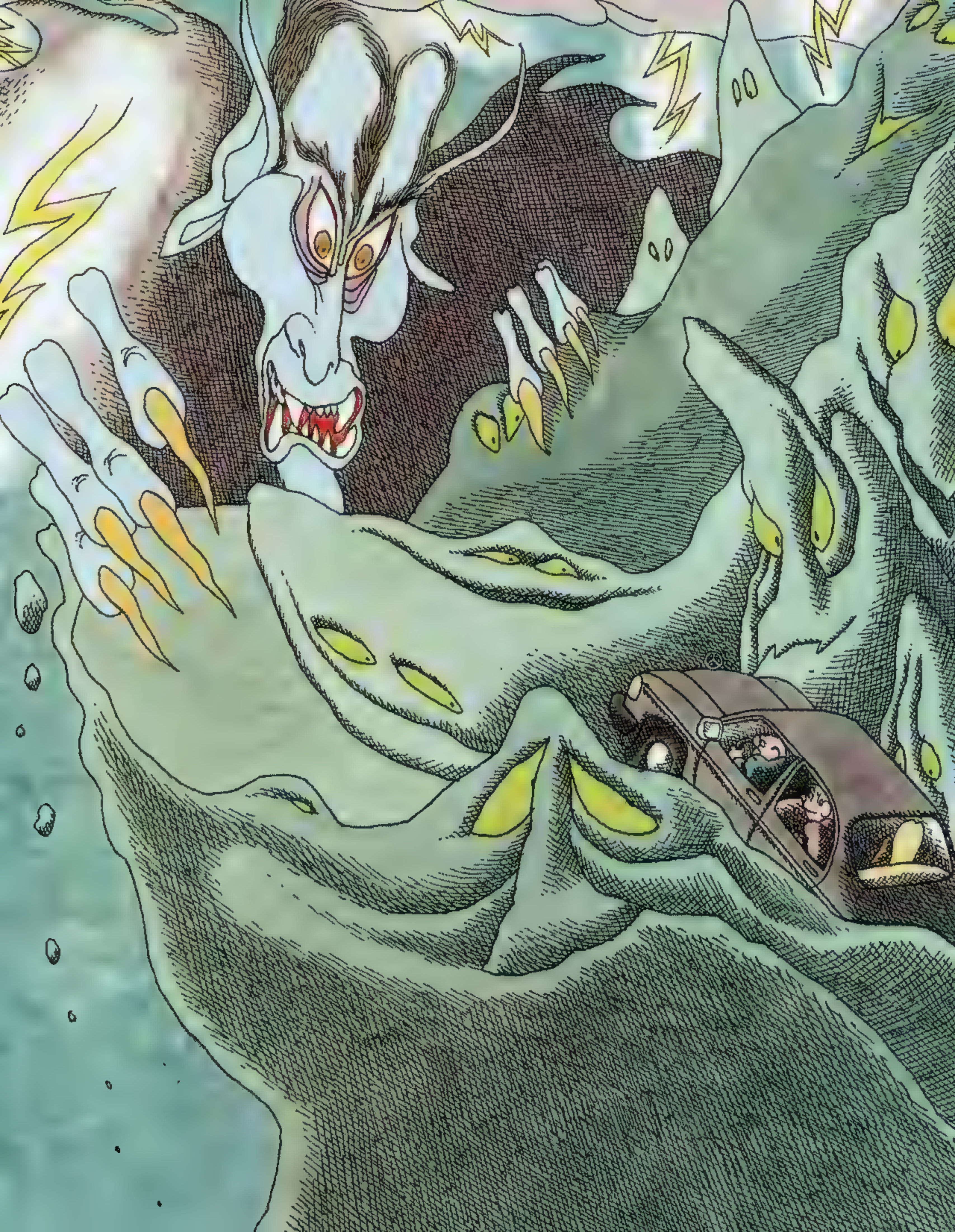
*But answer came there none—
And this was scarcely odd, because
They'd eaten every one.*

I looked up at the others. Like Irene, they were, all of them, dead. The Walrus and the Carpenter had eaten the oysters and left the shells.

The Carpenter never had found any firewood, and so they'd eaten them raw. You can eat oysters raw if you want to.

I said her name once more, just for the record, and then I stood and turned from them and walked to the bluff. I rounded the bluff and the beach stretched before me, vast, smooth, empty and remote.

Even as I ran upon it, away from them, it was remote. †



Dracula Country

A TOUR OF TRANSYLVANIA

by Gahan Wilson

Security at Romania's Otopeni Airport is severe but gently done. My wife, Nancy, and I are politely separated—it's weird to have come so far with her, to such a strange place, only to see her led away—and we are searched in curtained booths; she by uniformed women, I by lean young soldiers bearing automatic weapons. The soldiers are thorough but never rude, and though they constantly watch your eyes, they are careful to make comforting little jokes.

We're rejoined after the search and walked over to a customs official with a fixed smile who misses nothing. At the instant our passports are stamped, a dark man of medium height appears and introduces himself as our official guide from the Ministry of Tourism. His name is Nick (I like the Mephistophelean ring to it) and his looks and bearing put me very much in mind of Peter Lorre when Lorre was trim and fit. We shake hands all around and he smiles with a pleasantly sinister affability. "I understand you are interested in Dracula." He says it *Drah-koolah*, exactly like Bela Lugosi!

I don't know just when it dawned on me that there actually was a Transylvania. For years, like any other growing American kid, I'd assumed it was pure fantasy, that Bram Stoker had made it up as a suitable working locale for his fiend vampire, as L. Frank Baum had made up Oz for his Wizard and Tin Woodman. Certainly, Stoker's descriptions of the place, its towering, wolf-haunted mountains, its crumbling castles reeking with ancient evil, did not seem particularly credible to a lad of the mild Midwest. And who could believe in the bleak strangeness of the Borgo Pass or all those peasants with their dark legends and eerie superstitions?

A tough old man wearing a cap and a turtleneck sweater is waiting for us in the reception area. He gives us a friendly glare with his bright blue eyes, scoops up our baggage and glides off ahead of us into the crowd, dodging interference smoothly as we saunter along behind.

"I thought," says Nick, "we might start by visiting Snagov—site of the grave of Dracula. It seems appropriate, don't you think?"

Nancy and I exchange glances. It's been a long trip and we hoped for a rest, but who can resist Dracula's grave? The old man is stowing our luggage in the trunk of the black Mercedes as we come down the steps, but he's at the doors and got them open before we're near the car. He tucks us in back, giving Nancy a fatherly but appreciative smile and me a respectful nod, then ushers Nick into the front. As we get under way, Nick twists around and hands us our itinerary. I glance at it casually, wishing we could at least have a short nap; then my fatigue vanishes and I go back to its start, carefully reading each precious word. There, written in a small, precise hand on blue lined pages torn from a notebook, are the names of places I have dreamed of seeing for years. I pass it to Nancy.

"It's perfect," I tell her. "It couldn't be better."

I got my first hints about Dracula the same way I got those about sex and other dark, forbidden things; from whispers from another kid, far away from grownups.

The kid was Bobby Marty, and he'd sneaked out of Evanston to Howard Street, on the Chicago-Evanston border, which was pretty daring right there, and he'd gone into a Chicago movie theater where they showed pictures Evanston didn't, and he'd seen a

rerun of the first Lugosi movie and it had scared him silly. In an attempt to pass the scare on to me, he told me the whole story, acting out the parts, mostly that of Dracula, of course, and providing sound effects, including a really swell stake being driven into a human chest. I admired the strangeness of his version of the Lugosi accent and enjoyed the stalking and the way he clawed his hands and waved them about, but what determined me to take, in turn, that perilous expedition to Howard Street to see the movie for myself was the sinister, toothy smile that played on Bobby Marty's mouth.

The tough old chauffeur has taken off his cap now and revealed he's bald as a vulture. A driver of the Ian Fleming persuasion, he's belting the Mercedes along as fast as it can be done safely.

I'm terrified, at first, sure we'll all be killed before we get to Snagov or even out of sight of the airport, but then I see how he handles his passing, and how sudden stops ahead never take him by surprise, and relax. Nancy, I learn later, has complete trust in him from the start.

The traffic he's weaving us through so expertly is interesting: eccentric black tricycles, the men driving the sputtering motors, their wives or girlfriends holding long loaves of bread in the sidecars; trucks with two or three sections joined by accordion pleating; lots of Dacias, the Renault-styled national car, the only one they make; plenty of bicycles, many built for two, and, here and there, an oxcart.

We turn off into a forest and the road gets narrower and the traffic turns into a holiday parade, everybody heading for a picnic, family cars stuffed with baskets and big rubber balls, dogs lolling out the windows. We roll into a fair-sized parking lot cleared out of the woods, leave the car with the old man and head for a pier bedecked with bright flags where a man is renting all kinds of boats. Nick selects a broad sturdy looking rowboat and we push off through the water, thick with lilies bright in the sun, Nick on the

one oar, me on the other and Nancy in the prow, trailing her fingers in the water. Nick, grinning, mentions that the catfish in the lake are so big they commonly eat the ducks. Nancy laughs but leaves her fingers where they are. She's been to Africa with me, the Yucatán, scarier places than this.



I was fortunate. I did not see *Dracula* first on a tiny TV screen in, God help us, someone's living room; I saw it as it was designed to be seen: in a dark, cavernous theater, a glorious Gothic barn decorated with peeling murals and sagging tapestries. I did not understand then that I was in some film mogul's dream of European elegance, but I did know it was supposed to be a sort of palace. I doubt if I was aware that all the cracked and dusty grandeur looming about me lent poignancy to Lugosi's wistfully sinister line, "It reminds me of the broken

battlements of my own castle in Transylvania," but I did relish the booming acoustics that made the deep, alien voice echo and rumble, and I well knew the sheer size of the spectacle, the acreage of the screen that allowed such a vast spreading of that cloak, was vital to the overall effect.

The island's up ahead now, getting closer with each stroke of the oars. I recognize it from the pictures I've seen of it, by those towers topped with Byzantine crosses, but the pictures always showed it in autumnal gloom, not in sparkling sunlight surrounded by willows in shiny summer green; and if I imagined any background noise, it was a quiet lapping of water, not roars of outboard motors and kids yelling on water skis.

We tie up at a small, teetering dock. A couple of cheerful men are sitting on it, fishing with bamboo poles and drinking plum brandy from a labelless bottle. They offer us some and we take a sip before walking toward the chapel through the tall grass, annoying numerous waddling turkeys, and then

we enter, stepping on the grave. There's no way to enter the chapel without stepping on Dracula's grave. The thought cheers me. It was getting a bit too pastoral.

The peasants knew about the grave long before the experts, of course. And they knew about the other grave, too, the one before the altar. They set candles along its edges, had done so for as long as anyone could remember, no one knew just why. Eventually, the experts opened the altar grave and found, rudely entombed, an ox skull, and they are still arguing over what it might mean.

Then they opened the other grave, the one you step on as you enter, and found the ruins of a body wearing artifacts that indicate it may have been Dracula. The historical Dracula, that is.

The historical Dracula is not the Dracula Bobby Marty told me about in that dark alley; he is not the silver-and-black menace of Lugosi nor the horror smeared with Technicolor blood as played by Christopher Lee. He was the real-life warrior prince of Walachia, a Romanian national hero, and he defended the country from the Turks and held off invaders from the north and last year a grateful nation, with the blessings of its president, Nicolae Ceausescu, admitted him with appropriate pomp and ceremony into Romania's official hall of fame.

This existence of two Draculas, the historical and the literary, makes a pilgrimage at first a bit disappointing.

Suppose a Romanian author of the late 1880s hit on a clever idea for a thriller: Benjamin Franklin's life is extended by a freak accident with a kite in a thunderstorm and a series of increasingly weird and eventually deadly experiments is performed by the now deranged scientist during the first term of the Grover Cleveland Administration. Imagine that the book is established as a horror classic, is made into a number of movies abroad and its lead character joins the popular lore. Now, suppose a Romanian reader of *Franklin* makes a pilgrimage to the United States and, instead of being shown the site of the terrifying events he has read about, he is shown Franklin's printing shop and his seat in Independence Hall. He will be vastly interested, no doubt, or pretend to be, for the sake of his hosts, but will he feel himself in the presence of the green old man with a diabolical lightning simulator?

No.

But still, here, looking down at the grave, I can imagine something rustling underneath the stone flooring, and Nancy has bought a crucifix from the cheerful little priest who tends the chapel and has a wooden tray full of the things, not to mention holy medals and postcards. She puts it around her neck.

"Just thought I'd be prepared," she says, laughing.

"The peasants believe his body was put here so that the worshipers walking over it would, little by little, take away his sins," said Nick. He shrugged. "It is typical of him that when they got him to Bucharest, his body disappeared, along with everything else they had found."



The priest was waiting for us outside, holding up a double-page spread from some newspaper showing the excavations of the chapel in progress. He pointed carefully at various pictures, speaking to us in Romanian, nodding and smiling when he had made some point.

"He is explaining to us that Dracula was buried in his church," said Nick.

We have lunch at a pleasant bare wood restaurant in the forest, overlooking the lake. The place is mostly spreading roofed porches crowded with plank tables; it's designed for fine weather and can be neatly packed away when the ice and cold winds come. Each table has at least one wine cooler waiting by it with bottles of beer and soft drinks standing in a bed of crushed ice. I learn this is a basic prop for any Romanian eating place. The beer is locally made—each small area has its special, fiercely defended beer—and tastes something like British bitter. With it we have a roast chicken served with a bowl of garlic sauce, and I'm introduced to *mamaliga*, a sort of corn-meal pudding, which goes beautifully with the chicken and, I will learn, with almost anything else, and which I will think of henceforth and forever more as the country's national dish, even if it may not, by some fluke, own that status officially.

An old, old gypsy, bronzed and wrinkled, wanders about the tables in a shabby but neatly pressed suit and plays the violin. Another gypsy has a box full of folded bits of paper and a parakeet sitting on his shoulder. If you give the gypsy some money, the parakeet will hop onto the edge of the box and pluck out one of the papers and that will be your fortune. Nancy has her fortune read and it seems that someday she will be rich. Nick, meantime, continues his exposition on the historical Dracula.

They called him Dracula simply because that was the diminutive of what they called his father: Dracul, which means Devil. He was, and is, far better known under the name Vlad Tepes, which means Vlad the Impaler, which refers to his hobby of putting people on standing stakes and leaving them there to die.

Now, the Romanians do not pretend that Vlad Tepes was a gentle or a kindly man. "But," Nick says, looking around wide-eyed for any possible refutation, "name me a Fifteenth Century monarch who was!"

Besides, Nick argues reasonably, Vlad has all along suffered from a bad press: The pamphlets Stoker used for research were printed and written by Germans, and Germans had every reason to dislike him, since he would not pay them taxes and was consistently rude to their armies. A famous account of his villainy put out by them, the attack that took place on Saint Bartholomew's Day and the subsequent slaughter by stake of some 30,000 persons, loses something in effectiveness when it is pointed

out that a church, the objective of the attack, was actually a garrisoned fort and that it is doubtful whether the entire population in that area numbered as much as 3,000.

We stay that night in Bucharest, the capital, which looks surprisingly like a larger version of Nice. Romania was the chesspiece the French used in that endless game the major powers played over the Balkans, and their influence lingers in that city. They have, for example, some of the best croissants I've eaten.

The next day, we head north, the old man peering like an eagle over his wheel, Nick taking meticulous notes, Nancy and I keeping track of our progress on a floppy road map from the Romanian Automobile Club. We're heading for Targoviste, Dracula's capital when he was warrior prince of Walachia, the rich land spreading south of the Carpathians.

Bucharest dwindles to small houses behind almost endless green picket fences, and then we are in the country, American Midwest flat, with a tall corn crop on either side. I see a farmer and his ox looking tiny in the middle of their huge field and wonder how they do it.

One thing I worried about before the trip was the peasants. Would there be any and, if so, would they be quaint peasants? Oh, I'd seen photographs of peasants in the folders and guidebooks, wearing those woolly jackets with the flower patterns and smoking elaborate pipes, their women decked out in layers of colorful skirts topped with babushkas—but would there really be honest-to-God peasants wandering by the sides of the roads and actually living in the villages, or would there be only plastic ones, mostly running tourist curio shops? The answer is, friends, that there are lots of peasants, and they are real ones, and they have all the props, including goats and scythes and all that stuff. You don't have to worry about it.

The ruins are on the outskirts of the town, which is quaint and quiet seeming. There's a light sprinkling of tourists wandering amiably on walkways and through passages and climbing the wooden steps of the restored tower that dominates the scene. From the tower, you look down onto the palace that was the scene of Vlad Tepes's most purely nasty acts, none with a military excuse, just the sort of stuff a bored monarch might dream up after a few monotonous weeks at court.

Here is where he nailed the turbans to the heads of a Turkish delegation after they refused to doff them in his honor, and where he presented a visiting ambassador with a standing golden stake after dinner, asking him if he knew what it might be for, but here, most interestingly, is where he carried out a Draculian civic-improvement program by inviting the village's poor, old and lame to a banquet, locking them in at the height of the festivities and then burning the whole affair to the ground.

From there we veer west in our northern course to spend the night at Curtea-de-Arges, a small village possessing one of the prettiest little Byzantine churches in the world. It was a lot of bother to its architect, as he was forced to wall his wife up alive during the building, and when it was done, the king decided to kill him as well so he'd never build another as fine. The poor bastard improvised some wings out of roof planking in an attempt to fly away, but made it only across the road, and the crash site is presently marked by a spring babbling out of the rock he cracked on impact. Nick is full of stories like that.

The next day is one I've been looking forward to. Our target is the site associated with the historical Dracula that best evokes Stoker's monster as well: his ruined castle in the mountains high over the River Arges. This was his true lair, his favorite lurking place. He worked his worst enemies to death building it, and it was here he went whenever seriously threatened.

The trip isn't easy, as the river has broken loose shortly before and caused a dreadful flood. New roads have been improvised alongside the ruins of the old, and we edge across a wobbly wooden bridge while kids cheer us on from the bent steel beams of the one the flood has destroyed.

We park in a bulldozed clearing by a wide point of the river and head for some concrete steps that mount up a gentle, wooded slope. There is no sign marking the place that I can see. The driver, standing by his car, looks up at the cliffside rising over the

slope, shakes his bald head and mops it with a handkerchief.

"I would not hurry," Nick says, "but take a leisurely pace. There are fourteen hundred steps to the castle."

A soldier stands in a patch of wildflowers next to the stairs and we exchange shy nods and smiles while he shifts the strap of his Sten gun. The stairs take a bend and the upward slope starts to increase. I see another soldier standing at the next bend and, looking higher up, see the stairs form a series of hairpin bends going out of sight. We are about three bends past the second soldier when we hear him shouting down to his companion. We pause as Nick listens to the exchange.

"He says he has seen a viper," Nick explains cheerfully and we resume our climb.

The vegetation starts to thin and I see there has been considerable planting of vines and other things to firm the earth, held in place, amusingly, by hundreds of wooden stakes. Then I begin to observe paw prints here and there, set into the concrete of the stairs.

"Those are wolf tracks," says Nick. "The wolves would come out and play at night while the cement was still setting. There are bear tracks, too, of course."

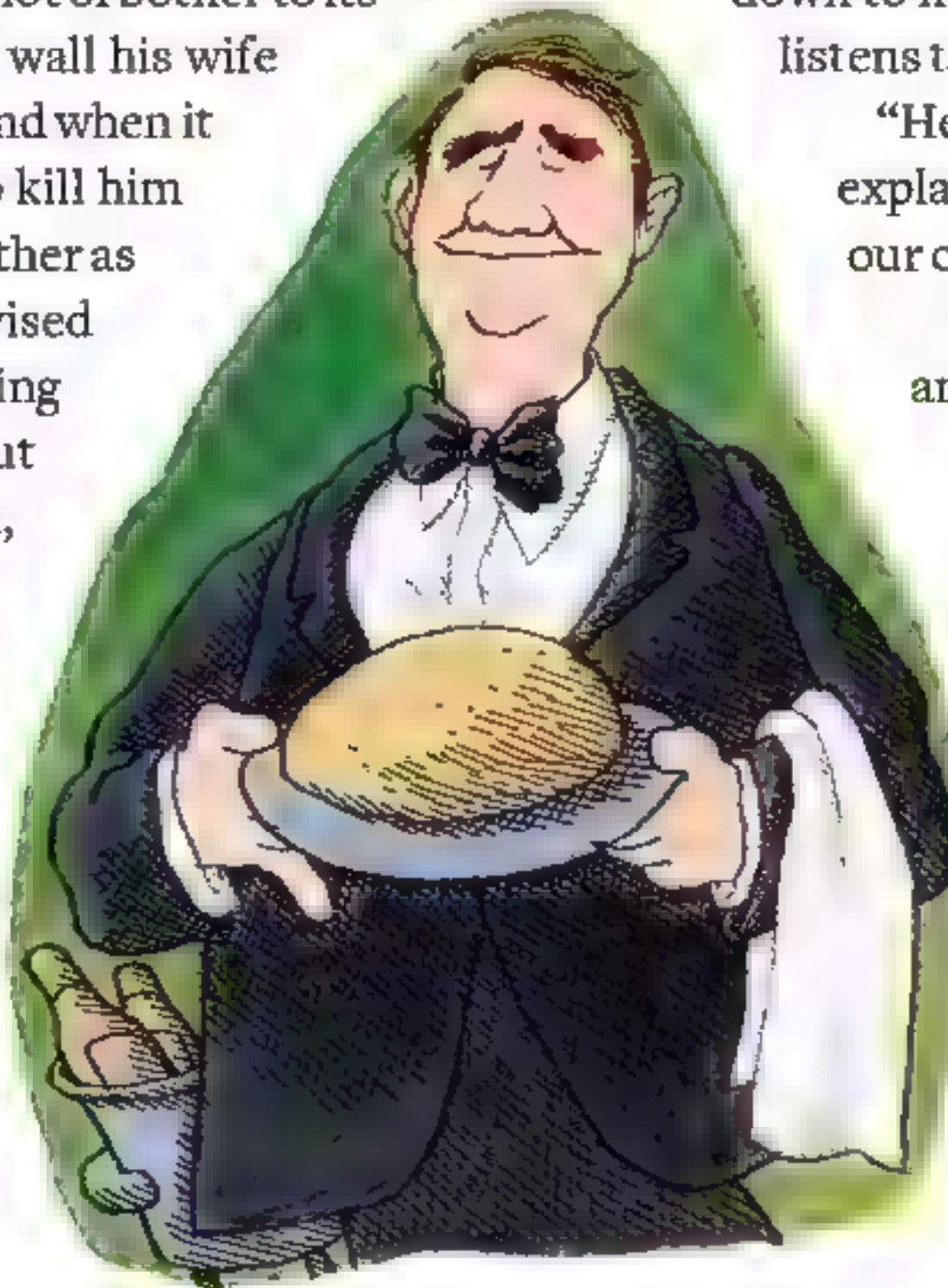
By now, the steepness of the slope down from the edge of the stairs is becoming more apparent. The parking space is very small, the driver, who has wandered across the road and is gazing down the further drop to the river, is a dot.

A slow, steady pace, together with an occasional pause, make the climb quite tolerable.

Then we come onto a ridge and the view turns spectacular.

We round a bend and pass before the incongruous little cottage of the caretaker, quite comfy and homey. There are pots of flowers on the porch. Ahead, up 100 or so more winding steps, is the castle.

It has been very partially restored, "propped up" might be better; rebuilt enough to be safe for snoop-



ing and climbing on. It reminds me more of Frankenstein than of Dracula, actually, and looks like the sort of place the good doctor would pick to bring some botched creation to life. The main tower is a dead ringer for that one in *Bride of Frankenstein*. All in all, I find it a very satisfyingly Gothic ruin and am sure it houses many owls and bats, and that wolves prowl it at night.

Scattered down one slope is a third of the castle, fallen during the year 1888, the year of Jack the Ripper. It was from that parapet that Vlad's wife threw herself to her death so he'd be unhampered in his flight from the Turks. Overlooking that view is Vlad's bedroom and, beneath that, the torture chamber.

Back in the car, speeding smoothly alongside the Arges. I look up at the Carpathians looming ever higher before us and rub my hands in an open glee. On the other side of those mountains lies my goal, for there, by God, is Transylvania—the home of the real Dracula, by God, the pale skinny man with the long, sharp teeth who sleeps in a coffin and crumbles in the sun. This historical stuff is all very well, but now and then it does get in the way!

The mountains are towering over us now and they look terrific. We are going to cross them at their highest point, the Făgăraș range, over a brand-new road, one that is still in the process of settling down. The Romanians, Nick explains, have a strong feeling for the ecology; they do not want to force the earth against its will, so they give it the option of accepting or rejecting innovations such as this road we are about to travel. They do not start by sinking piles and pouring concrete; they sketch out the road with bulldozers, using minimum shoring, and then they watch and see which curves and grades the mountain takes to, which ones it throws aside.

We've begun to climb, leisurely, but I can see glimpses of the road curling high above. It's packed earth with now and then a chunk missing from its outer edge and an uneven border of fallen rocks and earth along its inner. The chauffeur has hunched a little lower over his wheel and his gearshifting becomes noticeably more enthusiastic.

Nancy is looking apprehensively out the window. The sky was clear when we began our ascent but now clouds are scudding in from the north from Transylvania. Of course I am delighted to see them. There are occasional little red-and-white trestles placed on the border of the cliff's edge to warn of the

sheer drop beyond, but many of these have fallen, not a few along with generous portions of earth, and they look like scattered Band-Aids on the steep slopes below.

"I see," says Nick, smiling, "that this road has not yet been tamed."

The clouds, moving with remarkable speed, have covered the sky and are now starting a vertical expansion downward. Everything is suddenly wet, the rocks glistening, the earth road turning a bright red. Nick smiles. "I think Dracula has taken the form of a clump of thunderclouds," he says. "In order to welcome you appropriately." I smile back at him, but Nancy has grown very still, which means she is not enjoying herself at all.

We are nearing the top of the Carpathians and I see that the research and art departments at Universal Studios knew just what they were about when they did those lovely takedowns of appallingly rugged mountains in *The Invisible Ray*; but those big screens in the movie houses weren't big enough, after all, for they weren't up to suggesting the fantastic vastness of the place.

Directly ahead of us is the black gape of a tunnel cut into the rock—the entrance to Transylvania turns out to be a mysterious darkness—and at the precise moment of our entry, at the exact instant, I swear it, a huge bolt of lightning, fat and sordid-looking, spirms in from behind us and smashes ker-rak into the side of the opening. Nick and I are startled into laughter. Nancy frowns and clenches her teeth and we zoom into the darkness of the tunnel, which is no staid arrangement of concrete and tile

but a thing chopped and busted out of living rock, almost like a natural cave. Abruptly, like something from a haunted-house ride, I see a tall lady in a niche wearing a long white robe with a kind of hood, holding a candle in one hand and making signs at us with the other as if to ward off the evil eye. She is gone with equal suddenness and we emerge from the tunnel into the thickest, peltingest rain I have ever seen, even in the tropics.

The driver has the wipers on at once, but from the backseat, only water is visible. The roar of the rain on the roof is incredible. He hunkers down a little further over his wheel, readjusts his grip on it and I am pleased to see a grim smile twitch at the corner of his mouth. He is going to use all his skill and ingenuity to see that the storm doesn't slow him down.

At first we're surrounded by whirling darkness—we're actually working our way through the interior of a cloud—which is irregularly lit by blinding flashes of lightning showing jagged boulders and twisted spires of rock slanting at bizarre angles; sometimes the lightning silhouettes them in stark outlines, sometimes it blasts in front of them, floodlighting the rain bouncing off them and making them seem covered with dancing spangles.

Then we clear the cloud and the rain is pouring through a violently swirling grayness, like Poe's *Maestrom*, and I see swollen streams gushing down into the abyss, carrying rocks along with the force of their passage. Nick and I are clapping our hands in delight and laughing like a couple of fools. I've never been on a more exciting ride in my life, but Nancy—who never batted an eye when we were in an automobile accident in

Kenya, who drove through the Yucatan jungle before they had the road in—Nancy has become positively grim-faced.

Suddenly on a particularly narrow stretch of road, there is a wild cascade of banging on the roof and we see rocks spinning by the windows. Nick and I are instantly startled and even the driver looks up with alarm. It's the only time I have seen him startled. For a moment, we all hold our breath but nothing more happens and we zoom on, the chauffeur neatly maneuvering a series of incredible descending hairpin turns, until finally we reach a little roadside inn, filled with shepherders, where we decide to stop for lunch.

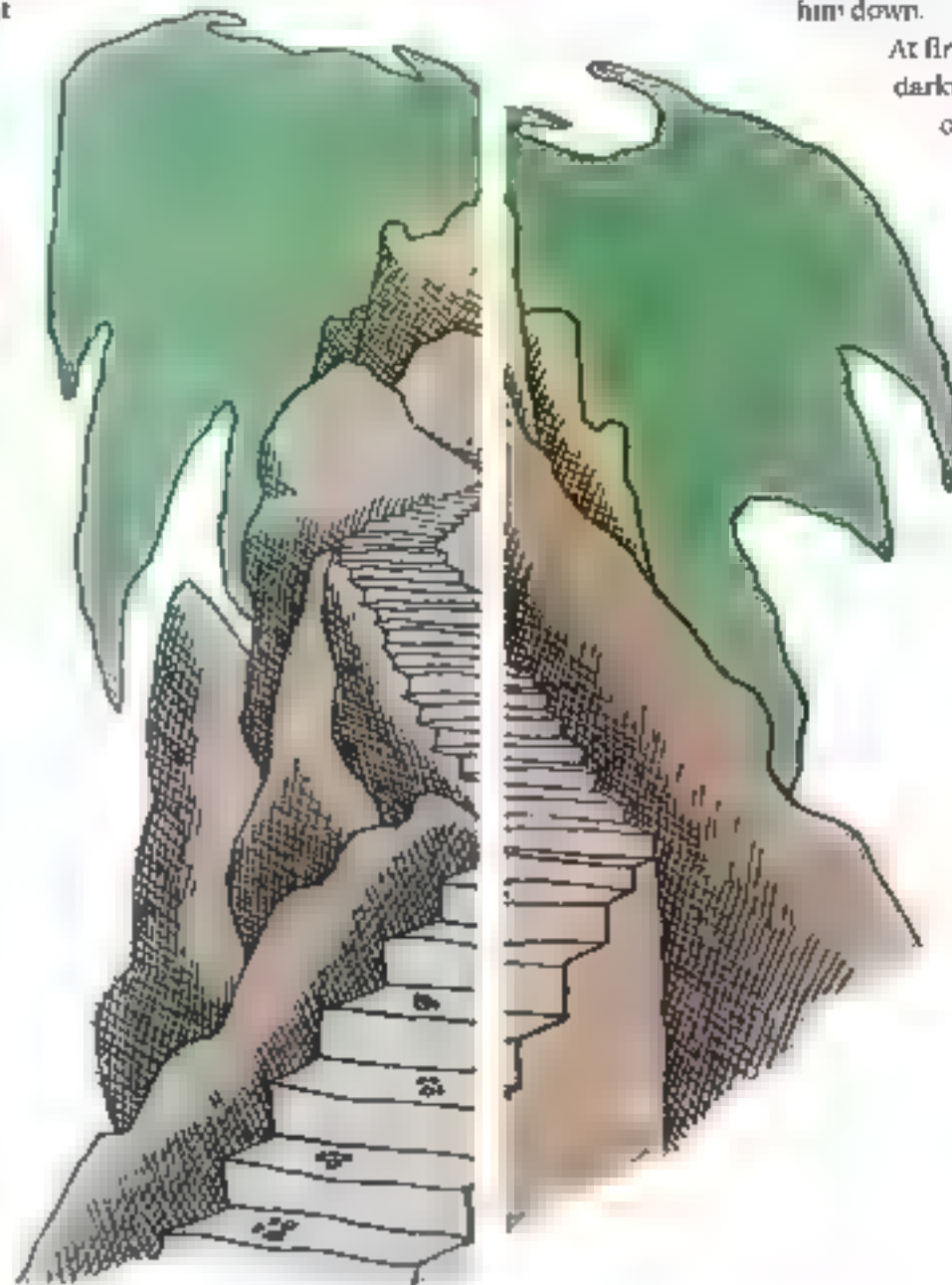
"Let us thank our chauffeur for seeing us safely through," announces Nick, and Nancy reaches her arms into the front seat and gives the old man a huge hug, which Nick smiles at but does not entirely approve of. Then his eyes light up as he spots a huge, pale butterfly flopping through the moist air from one dripping branch to the next.

"Ah, I see Dracula has taken on another form to see how we enjoyed his welcome."

Then we go into the inn, all four of us together, to toast our survival with Russian vodka and stuff ourselves with meat grilled and spiced in the manner Transylvanian bandits used to favor, and maybe still do.

Of course I am entirely satisfied with our sensational ride through the Carpathians; it was more than I'd dared hope for since I'd long ago looked up from the *Encyclopædia Britannica* in the Evanston Public Library and realized Stoker's locales were honest to God based on fact, but there is more to come. There is Bistrita, where Jonathan Harker stayed at the Golden Crown Hotel and had a crucifix pressed on him by his frightened hosts, and, better, the Borgo Pass, the wild valley that Harker drove through in a wolf-accompanied coach to Dracula's castle itself.

We spend the night in a monastery called, oddly, Upper Saturday. It has wood-burning stoves and you walk through corridors lined with glittering glass icons showing Christ sprouting branches and saints bleeding and Michael slaying the dragon. Nancy snuggles close to me beneath the fat goose-down quilt on the enormous bed in our tiny room, elaborately decorated in red velvet. She has stopped making jokes and, I notice in the flickering firelight,



has kept the crucifix on. The next morning, we have breakfast with the abbot, who shows us the proper Romanian way to open and eat a fresh green pepper.

We drive most of the next day and it's late when our headlights pick up the sign BISTRITA. My initial reaction is what I have feared for all these years: disappointment. It's a place of tidy avenues with trimmed trees and modern lamps and ordinary looking houses. It actually reminds me of Evanston, and when we pull up at an aggressively un-mysterious-looking gas station and the pump goes *ting*, just like it did on Dempster Street, I wonder if I am the butt of some cosmic joke.

My apprehension increases considerably when we arrive at the Golden Crown Hotel. It is purposely named after the place Stoker made up, but offhand I can't see any other point of resemblance. It's a nice, comfortable place, a little too much like home, and I wouldn't be at all surprised to look out at the up-to-date parking lot and see Fords and Chevies with ILLINOIS, LAND OF LINCOLN license plates. True, the band in the restaurant does break off the prom music to play a doina, which is to say it does its best to imitate a pack of wolves, a favorite pastime of the live musicians found in almost every eating establishment in the country, but this traveling businessman's hotel is definitely not what I had in mind.

The next day, we go to the old part of town and I perk up at once. This is much more like it. I can easily imagine Jonathan Harker wandering under the arcades, browsing over the curious foods and goods for sale in the little shops, and I'm delighted to see there are plenty of elderly ladies with babushkas and colorful clothing and, yes, crucifixes; there seem to be plenty of crucifixes.

It is all very much like the Bistrita I had hoped and, on braver days, expected to see. The only odd thing is that the most noticeable feature of the whole place is a huge church with a towering steeple, which, I learn, can be seen for miles. It is by far the most

outstanding and memorable building in Bistrita, yet Harker doesn't mention it once in *Dracula*, despite a lengthy description of the town, doubtless because the author never actually made the trip himself.

When we return to the hotel, I decide it really isn't so bad, after all. They *do* sell wolf and bear salami in their shop, though they're momentarily out of wolf, and there are a few badly painted but well-meant Dracula plaques (one of which, for no reason at all, suddenly falls off the wall and hits poor Nancy on the head) for sale and, of course, plenty more crucifixes.

Nick has arranged for us to meet the local director of tourism and he turns out to be a large, cheerful man who is a Dracula buff; admiring not just the historical Dracula but, like Nick, the real one as well.

He ushers us into a secret room (I'm delighted to learn the Golden Crown has one) and pours us a rich, red Romanian wine, which, of course, inspires us to make lots of little jokes about drinking blood. He has the only copy of *Dracula* I've seen in the country, well thumbed, a collection of very scary folk masks and a file of mail from Draculafansallovertheworld, a good many of whom seem actually to believe he exists, including, interestingly, a number of females, many enclosing photos, offering their fair white necks for biting. Our host denies, with a carefully ambiguous smile, accepting any of these latter invitations, but he answers all letters

sent to Dracula, care of Transylvania, as diligently as his opposite number at the North Pole replies to those sent to Santa Claus.

We have a little more wine, make a few more jokes, which now strike everybody as really hilarious (even Nancy, the cut on her head having finally stopped bleeding, relaxes a bit), and then the driver peeks in, carrying a big wicker basket—everything is ready for the picnic!

In all his informed guesses, Stoker is nowhere more on target than in his description of the



approach to Borgo Pass: the groves of apple trees, the sloping landscape, the lumbering oxcarts, the roadside crosses (though he had not mentioned painted tin Christs nailed to them); and, yes, even the peasants praying at their shrines were there. I gave a huge sigh of relief and smiled at the lowering mountains ahead. I was doing what I had so long wanted to do and it was working.

The road through the pass itself does not wind through crags and cliffs as I thought; it's more a building from hillocks to taller heights, and then, on either side, the steep rising of huge, rugged masses in the distance. We stop the car at a spot that strikes me as satisfyingly forlorn, make our way up the hillside to a tree and are in the process of setting up our picnic when an enormous white dog appears. He smiles at us, revealing unbelievable teeth, and sits down.

"It would appear," says Nick, "that Dracula has taken one of his more traditional forms to join us at our feast."

We arrange ourselves on a spread blanket, Nancy serves out our plates while the rest of us, including the dog, from whom she keeps her distance, wait, patiently, and then we all dine together, the dog getting most of the bear salami. We are just finishing the last of the local beer when Nick points out something on a far hill.

"I've never seen that before," he says.

The sun is hitting it just right, making it stand out clearly on its mountain. Were there turrets? Could I just make out a broken battlement?

"It's some kind of a huge castle," says Nancy. "A great, huge castle."

"What do you think?" asks Nick. "Do you think that's it?"

"I think that's it," I say.

We leave in no great hurry. The dog has walked us to our car and sits now, huge and white against the grass, smiling and licking the last of the bear salami from his enormous teeth as he watches us out of sight.

Sitting back in the Mercedes, I think about Bobby Marty and wish we hadn't lost touch. This time, I would like to tell *him* about Dracula and the land in which he lived and, I'm sure Bobby and I would agree, could we get together, lives yet.

There is a long silence, broken finally by Nancy, who has brightened considerably, now that we are headed back to Bucharest.

"What do you suppose the driver's made of this?" she asks Nick. "All this Dracula business?"

"Oh, he really doesn't care," says Nick. "He just drives."

"Has he ever heard of Dracula?" she persists.

Nick asks the driver.

"*Drah-koo-lah?*" says the driver, keeping his eyes on the road. "*Drah-koo-lah?*" He shakes his head. It's new to him.

"Ask him if he's heard of Vlad Tepes," I say, and Nick does, and the driver replies. Nick turns and smiles, an elbow resting on the back of his seat.

"Vlad Tepes, yes, Vlad Tepes," he translates. "He's buried in Snagov." †

A Gift of the Gods

by Gahan Wilson

Spring always snuck up on the children in Lakeside. The winters were so convincing and so durable that we eventually forgot about other possibilities, about a chance of change.

Then, always without warning, there were tender new leaves on the bushes surrounding the apartment buildings; a fresh, clayey smell of earth everywhere; birds picking up broom and mop fragments for making nests; summer vacation becoming an actual possibility; the bravest new flies crawling out from their hiding places along the edges of windows and wandering on the sunny panes—and the children began taking ruminative walks, going places they wouldn't ordinarily go and observing things they would ordinarily ignore.

It was the time of exploration come again, and the taste and feel of new adventure were everywhere, infusing the world, and none of the implications of any of it was lost on Henry Laird.

He had been walking, for no conscious reason, along the broad quietness of Harmon Avenue, gazing at the fine old trees and the low hills of the lawns and the looming bulks of the old mansions that lined its sides, when he found he had come to the little park that sat at the end of Main Street and faced the great spread of the lake.

The park was a small jewel of design, with its gardens gracious even now, before their real blooming; and its budding trees, waiting for their new leaves, stood composed in smooth, stylish curves and clumpings.

In the center of the park, or, rather, just enough off its center to make its location more interesting,

was a small Grecian temple of the open, pillared style. Henry climbed the western steps and stood on the porch like a lost prince come at last to his kingdom.

The air from the lake wafted as gently over his face as a deliberately loving stroke, so he pulled his wool cap from his head in order to let the breeze caress more of him. He closed his eyes for a long moment and after some time, let them flutter open. At first, he looked about dazedly, enjoying the faint, odd, golden gleam that everything about him had taken on; but then he began to observe his surroundings in some detail, looking around in the manner of one who has returned home after a long and hazardous voyage.

It was then, for the first time, that he saw the greasy paper sack.

A thing as ugly as that had no business being in such surroundings. It belonged in a dingy alley next to garbage cans. It was not proper that such an object be in such a place as this. Henry advanced to the brown sack and, after a moment's hesitation over its really spectacular filthiness, bent down and picked the thing up with both his hands.

It was nowhere near as heavy as its bulk seemed to indicate. Although it was jammed full, almost to bursting, it could not weigh a full three pounds. A rich animal reek exuded from the sack, and Henry peeked down into its gaping mouth and saw that it seemed to be stuffed full of grayish-black hair. He would remove the disreputable, odious thing.

But just before he left the park—just before he stepped from its grass to the sidewalk that would lead him back into the 20th Century maze of con-

crete and asphalt that made up the basic webbing of this modern world—he became aware of being observed.

Something, he knew it, something with shiny, dark eyes was watching him, was carefully taking his measure as a hunter does of a rabbit or a lion of a zebra colt; and it was thinking, he could feel it in his own mouth, how Henry Laird would taste if you sunk your teeth into his shoulder until the skin split and the muscles tore and the blood spurted into your maw. And it was enjoying the taste, enjoying it very much.

So Henry quit the little park with more speed than he ordinarily might have used, and he was very glad when he reached his apartment building with his shoulder still unsplit and whole, and he was even gladder when he had gained the safety of his bedroom, having gotten past his mother, who, thank God, was busy making Jell-O with fruit in it and so hadn't caught as much as a glimpse of him or what he bore.

In his room, on his desk, the sack looked even worse than it had before. Its splotchings were more numerous and varied now, it seemed, and the disreputable, furtive look of it, its sullen poverty, made it stand out starkly against its present comfortable surroundings.

Henry took hold of the long, dark hair that poked from the sack's mouth, and when he tugged, it slithered forth and cascaded smoothly to the floor almost like liquid, like thick blood or oil. Henry tossed the sack aside and went to his knees, smoothing the fur with his hands, spreading it out; and then, with a silent gasp and a widening of his eyes, he saw what he had got.

From its head (for it certainly had a head) to the sharp, curving claws of its hind feet (for it had them, too), it was a kind of nightmare costume made of, as far as Henry could see, one single pelt for all its six foot length and the wide stretch of its arms or upper legs.

It was animalskin, no doubt of it, bestial for certain, and yet there was an extremely disquieting suggestion of the human about it, too. It seemed to have been scalped from something between species, something caught in the middle of an evolutionary leap or fall.

The ears were animal in shape, pointed and high-peaked, with the wide cupping given to wild things that they might better hear their prey or would be killer padding in the dark, and yet the placement of them, their relation to the forehead, was entirely human. And was that a nose or a snout?

It was hard to say, too, whether the appendages at the ends of its arms or forelegs were claws or hands, since they had something of the qualities of both. The cruelty in their design strongly suggested an anatomy too brutal to be human, yet the thumbs and the forefingers were clearly opposable, and there was something about the formation of the palms that denied their being exclusively animal.

Of course, in their present condition, these last were neither hands nor claws; they were gloves. Large gloves—far too large for the hands of Henry Laird, for instance—but gloves all the same.

Henry held his left hand over the left glove of the costume. Yes, it was far, far too small to fill that hairy, clawed container. The fingers of them were inches too long. If he slipped his fingers into them—it was a strangely disquieting thought that made all of his own skin tingle and crawl—the gloves would dangle limply hollow from the first knuckle.

Still, Henry would try; and he moved his hand down in a kind of slow swoop to where the skin gaped in a slit just under the costume's palm and slid his hand in, noting how smoothly and effortlessly it seemed to glide; and when it was in, entirely in, the glove, with an odd noise something like a cat's hiss, shrank in against the fingers and back and palm of Henry's hand until it fit him like a second skin.

Henry gave a kind of muffled shriek, stifling it with his unclad hand, and then pulled frantically at the glove. He expected a horrible resistance, but no such thing; it slid off most cooperatively—shot off, really, since he had pulled it so hard—and when Henry saw that his hand seemed none the worse for having worn it, he slipped the glove on and off again a few more experimental times.

Now it seemed that Henry's wearing of the glove had permanently affected it, for it remained his exact size, whether he had it on or not, which meant it was now ludicrously small for its opposite partner; so Henry, after giving the matter a little thought, slipped his other hand into the other glove with identical effect and the end result that the two were now precisely the same size—which is to say Henry's size.

The implications of this singular phenomenon gave Henry a clear challenge that very few boys his age could have resisted, and certainly Henry did not; and so, after going very quietly to the door and peeking out of it and listening carefully to make sure that his mother was still immersed in making fruit Jell-O, Henry picked up the costume and, with just a slight grating of his teeth and squinching up of his face, slipped it on.

He started with the legs, slipping into them as he would into pants, and gasped slightly as they shrank instantly to accommodate his size, again with that catlike hissing sound; and then he hunched into the arms, and they, hissing, fitted to him; and then there was a very alarming moment when the torso of the costume curled round his own and shrank to coat him smoothly, this with the loudest hissing of all; and then, by far the worst, the whole thing sealed up, the openings withering down to slits and the slits healing to unbroken skin, until his whole body was covered and wrapped with the dark-gray pelt.

Except for his head, that is. Henry had left the head for the last, just as he would have done with a Halloween costume.

He walked over to the mirror set into the door and gazed at himself in wonder, his pink face staring above the dark, hairy body, a mad scientist's transplant. He moved his arms and legs, experimentally at first, and watched their reflections make little, cautious movements. He reached out with one hand to touch the mirror and thrilled when he realized that he was actually feeling the glass not through the skin, as one does when wearing a glove, but with the skin!

After a time of touching and moving and carefully watching, Henry reached up behind him, groping for the mask, which was dangling down his back like a hood, and took hold of it and, very slowly and cautiously, watching anxiously all the time, slipped it over the top of his head and then his forehead; and then, closing his eyes—somehow, he did not want them to be open when they would be blind and covered—he pulled the mask completely down until the fur of its neck met the fur of the costume's chest, and he shuddered violently when he felt, with his lids still firmly closed, the whole business squeeze gently in, molding itself to the flesh of his face; and only when the catlike hissing had faded away entirely did he dare open his eyes.

There, facing him from the mirror of his own bedroom, with his desk covered with homework and a hanging model airplane for its background, was a monster—a small monster, true, but no less frightening for that.

Henry crouched a little as he studied his reflection. It seemed more comfortable that way. He moved his face closer to the glass. The nostrils worked as he breathed.

He lifted his head slightly and inhaled deeply and found he could smell the Jell-O his mother was making way off in the kitchen more clearly than he would ordinarily be able to do if he put his nose close enough to the pot to feel the heat.

He looked back at his reflection and studied his eyes intently. They were his eyes, no doubt of that, though the blueness of them was strange in their present setting. Then he opened his mouth and nearly fainted.

It was in no way the mouth of Henry Laird. It had fangs, for one thing, for the most obvious thing, but the differences did not stop there. All its teeth were as sharp as needles, every single tooth; and moving in and around them and lapping over them, constantly on the move, was a long, lean, curling tongue. Not Henry Laird's tongue. Not even a human tongue.

Without giving any thought to it, Henry pulled the skin costume from his head, his arms, his whole body, and threw it to the floor.

Again he studied himself in the mirror, touching his forehead, feeling his arms, wiggling his fingers; and then, only after all those preliminary tests, he opened his mouth and nearly cried aloud in his relief in seeing nothing more formidable in it than the ordinary incisors and molars with the occasional filling put here and there by Dr. Mineke, the family dentist, because of Mounds bars and licorice.

The skin was returned to its filthy paper sack, the sack was stuffed into the rear of the bottom drawer of his bureau and Henry took the most meticulous shower of his life and scrubbed his mouth three times in a row with Stripe toothpaste.

About ten that night, when Henry was just about to go to bed and had almost convinced himself that there was nothing waiting in his room, the doorbell rang and his father got out of his easy chair with a grunt and pushed the button by the doorbell so that

he could talk with whomever it was downstairs and said, "Yes? Yes? Who's there?"

At first, there was nothing but breathing from downstairs; then they all heard a voice, Henry and his father and his mother—a deep, growly sort of voice.

"I want it back," the voice said, muffled and distorted.

"What?" asked Henry's father. "What did you say?"

"You give it back," the voice said, louder; and this time you could hear the saliva in it, the drool. "It's mine, you! They gave it to me, see?"

"Look here," said Henry's father, "I don't know who you are or what you're trying to say."

"Who is that, dear?" asked Henry's mother. "What does he want?"

Now there was only breathing, heavier than before and with the hiss of spittle.

"You're going to have to speak up," said Henry's father. "I can't make out a word you're saying."

But now the breathing was gone and there was only the sound of rain, near and insistent as it battered and spattered against the windows of the apartment. Henry quietly gathered up his books from the table where he had been doing his homework.

"Hello? Hello?" said Henry's father, pressing impatiently on the LISTEN button. "I think he's some drunk."

Henry started down the hall, holding his school books to his chest.

"Whoever he was, he seems to have gone," said Henry's father, and the rain, which had suddenly grown much fiercer, began throwing itself against the windows in alarming, angry seeming gusts.

"Well, he certainly doesn't sound like anyone we know," said Henry's mother, and his father, chewing his lip a little, casting a glance or two at the front hall door of the apartment, settled again into his easy chair.

Lying in his bed, staring up at a ceiling too dark to be seen, Henry listened to the roaring wind and considered the situation.

Outside, in the wet wildness of this awful night, prowled a being dangerous to Henry and his family. It would not do just to give back what was asked for. Wearing the skin had roused something in Henry

that knew all that and relished what it now made necessary.

When it seemed from the stillness of the apartment that his parents were asleep, Henry rose, carefully and quietly, padded across the floor to his bureau, extracted the skin from its double confinement of sack and drawer and slipped it on.

The cat hissings merged into one smooth, unbroken cry when he donned the costume all at once, going from a kind of throaty purr to a final yowl of triumph as the mask sealed on, but all blended into the sound of the rain. Henry was sure his parents had heard none of it.

His passage through the apartment to the kitchen was so near to silent that even his hearing, heightened astoundingly by its joining with the high peaked ears of what he wore, was unable to detect any of it save for the tiniest clicking as he turned the back-door lock. He took a deep breath, opened and closed the door as quickly and softly as he could, and he was standing in the wind and pelting rain on the apartment's back porch.

He rested his claws—for they were claws, not hands—on the wooden railing of the porch and peered down and around three stories below at the apartment's huge backyard.

There were occasional lights mounted here and there, none too solidly from the wild way they swayed in the wind: some on posts, spewing their swaying beams on parked cars; some fixed to the brick walls of the building, making a dancing shine on dark, wet windows or creating ominous shiftings of shadows in the depths of basement entrances; but none of them did much to dispel the dank gloom all about.

Henry lifted his snout and inhaled deeply and questingly and got a wild medley of night odors: rain and cinders; something strong blown in from the lake; a nest hidden on a nearby roof whose smell of new eggs and bird flesh made his mouth, with its needle-sharp teeth and long, lolling tongue, water but not a whiff of his enemy.

He began to trot quietly down the rain-slicked wooden steps, glancing sharply about with his incongruous blue eyes as he moved.

He did not stop at the foot of the steps—there was a revealing pool of light from a lamp—but ducked quickly into a sooty patch of shadow before he crouched and sucked in great pulls of air, analyz-

ing each one carefully before turning an inch or so to sample again. Then, suddenly, he froze and blinked and inhaled again without moving, this time even deeper, and a snarling kind of chuckle came from his throat, and his teeth were bared in a human, if singularly cruel, grin.

Bent low, ducking craftily from shadow to shadow, Henry dodged his way nearer and nearer to the wide gap in the wooden fence that led to the alley in back of the building.

He pressed himself against the wall, listening with his animal ears and feeling the rain exactly as though it were falling on his own bare skin. He could make out the motor of a far-distant car: someone in an apartment was playing dance music on a radio and humming to it; there was a muffled mewing from a covered nest of kittens; and there was the harsh, slurred breathing of his enemy.

He was near. His smell was mixed with garbage smells: moldering oranges and lamb bones gone bad mingled with a hot hate smell, a killing smell out there in the dark. He was very likely watching the opening in the fence. Henry slowly backed up along the fence away from the opening until it joined a porch. After a listening pause to make sure the enemy had not moved, he stealthily climbed the porch's side, which gave him a perch just overlooking the alley.

The tar of the alley gleamed like black enamel in the rain from the light of the bare bulb mounted over the rear door of the apartment building opposite. The first sweep of his glance seemed to indicate that the alley was innocent of anything save a tidy army of garbage cans beside the building's concrete landing and a less respectable accumulation of cans and rubbish just outside the backyard of a private house farther down, but a squinting second look showed an ominous bulk hunkered down between the second batch of garbage and a low wooden fence.

Silently, hurrying as fast as he could so as not to give the enemy time to mull things over and change position, Henry made his way through his building and around the block so that he could approach the alley fence of the private house from its rear. Once in the house's backyard, he dropped to all fours and inhaled deeply. He grinned again, and this time the grin was significantly less human than it had been before. His prey was still there.

The impulse to rush with all speed so that he might throw himself at once upon his enemy and rip

his skin and drink his spurting blood was so devastatingly strong that the flesh of Henry's flanks rippled suppressing it. He hunched down, puffing from the effort of wresting control from the sudden killing urge. He could not let such a thing master him. A blind scurry forward might undo all his cleverness so far. He had done well as a neophyte; he must continue to do so.

But still the smell of the enemy, the rich meatiness of it, was maddening. It seemed he could even detect the pulsings in the veins and arteries!

He forced himself into calmness, hunching low into the wet grass. He took a deep snuff of the earth scent in an attempt to clear his head and then began to work his way slowly and silently forward toward where the pile of garbage and his victim were lumped together on the fence's other side.

But as he drew nearer, he became aware of some confusion. It seemed the garbage stench was growing stronger than his victim's. Then it crossed his mind that that might well have been the reason that place had been chosen. He was, after all, dealing with someone far more experienced than himse—

Then there was a terrific shock and a sidewise lurch, and Henry's head exploded in a searing blast of light followed by a great, black rushing that threw him into a confusion of motion, not himself moving but himself being moved, roughly, brutally, and he screamed because of the awful, horrible pain—someone was tearing the skin from his face, ripping it off him, roots and all, and now his scalp and now the flesh of his neck—and he screamed and screamed and cried out, "Please, please stop!" but the tearing of the flesh from his body did not stop, only went on and on; and with each violent ripping and rending of himself from himself, the raw agony burned over more and more of him, until he was nothing but a scorched, stripped leaving thrown aside.

He lay naked on the wet grass, confusing his tears with the rain running over his body, and was profoundly grateful for the tears and the rain, for they were cooling and healing the rawness of him so that he was becoming aware of something other than pain, aware of the night and of movement before him.

There was the enemy before him, the victor, not the victim, huge and smelling—even to Henry's human nose, the stench of him was clear enough—hunched down and pulling this way and that at something in his hands.

"You spoiled it, goddamn, you little bastard!" the enemy sobbed and, leaning over, huge and dark in the night, sent a pale fist lashing out and knocked Henry's head back painfully against the fence. "You fucked it up, you little prick!"

Henry curled closer into himself and for the first time realized that the thing the enemy was tugging at was the costume. He did it with such absorption and violence that at one point his hat fell from his head and the rain streaked his long, black hair in curling ribbons down his furrowed forehead without his noticing.

The enemy's eyes were shiny and black, as Henry had sensed they were back in the park with the Grecian temple, and his teeth, though human, seemed much more pointed than the norm, the canines longer and sharper. All were bared in alternate snarling and sobbing, for the enemy was desperate. At length, he threw the costume down in fury and then lunged at Henry, taking him by the shoulders and shaking him hard enough to make his teeth rattle.

"It's all gone small, you little son of a bitch!" he shouted into Henry's face, and the stink of his breath made Henry gag. "What did you do, hah, you fucker? How did you make it shrink, you shit?"

"I put it on!" Henry sobbed, his head bouncing crazily as the enemy continued to shake him. "I put it on!"

A crafty look sprang into the enemy's face. He held Henry still for a long second, staring closely at his face.

"Yeah," he said. "Yeah, I remember. It changed when they gave it to me!"

He threw Henry hard against the fence and clawed up the skin, holding it spread open before him like a huge, soggy bat.

"Yeah," said the foe to himself, his wet face gleaming, his long canines shining. "Yeah!"

Then, with a growling chuckle, he lifted the costume's arm, pushed his huge hand into the skin glove of it and grinned wider and wider until it seemed that all of his teeth, his not really human teeth, were showing. The glove had stretched easily, and that which had been a small claw when Henry wore it was now something like a grizzly's paw.

He held his hand wearing the glove high into the rain in savage triumph, the rest of the costume trailing from it like a shaggy banner, and then he thrust it in front of Henry, waving it as a fist under his nose.

"You wait, you little piece of shit!" he crowed. "You wait till you see what I do to your face with this!"

He pulled on the other glove with equal ease, then stood and stepped into the hairy costume with his long, powerful legs, roaring with laughter when they slid in smoothly. A great flash of lightning made Henry blink, and when he opened his eyes, it was to see the costume curling round his enemy's chest, fitting it with a loving closeness.

His foe looked down at him with a grin of hate that made Henry shudder, and then, as a sudden crash of thunder made the ground jump, the grizzly paws took hold of the costume's mask, pulling it over the brutal, laughing face, so that the following volley of crackling lightning showed the monster standing there complete, towering awesomely over Henry, striding toward him, bending down and picking him up with a paw clutching either side of his throat. "I got you now, you little fuck!" the monster said, and Henry felt his weight making the long claws dig into his neck as he was swung in a high arc close to the hairy face grinning with fangs of such a fearsome length and sharpness that he almost vomited at the sight of them.

Then the monster suddenly froze position, and as Henry watched, the ghastly maw's grin made a weird, rapid transition, faltering, twisting and finally turning to a wide gape of dismay.

"Naw!" his enemy snarled. "Naaaw!"

And then came a shocking crash of thunder, loud enough to make the very ground of Lakeside shudder, and as it pealed and pealed, rolling round in the sky, Henry saw the monster's eyes bulge impossibly, and then the paws released him with a spastic gesture and he landed with a hard thump on the ground to stare up in astonishment.

Lit by endless lightning, all sound of him drowned out by the ceaseless, merciless, air flung cacophony, the monster pranced wildly in a crazy dance, arms and legs swinging like a mad jumping jack's, and from the gape of his horrible jaws and the spewing of blood and saliva, his screams must have been blood curdlingly ghastly could they have been heard.

But they could not; thunder censored all—and so it was in a kind of earsplitting silence that Henry saw the monster's eyes bulge more and more until the roundness of them projected entirely outside the sockets of the mask, and then they were violently ejected in a double spray of blood, and Henry found

himself staring unbelievably at the extraordinary sight of his blinded enemy beginning to shrink before him!

At first, the process was uneven, one huge paw shriveling at a time, an arm bunching oddly and then shortening in a jerky telescopic fashion; but then, almost as if getting the feel of it, the whole creature began to reduce itself in step, so to speak; and as Henry watched in appalled fascination but with an undeniable undertone of profound satisfaction, he saw the being crushed down by stages, dancing and screaming all the while, kept alive and conscious by some horrendous magic until it was no larger than he had been while in the costume—until, that is, the costume had returned itself to a perfect fit for Henry

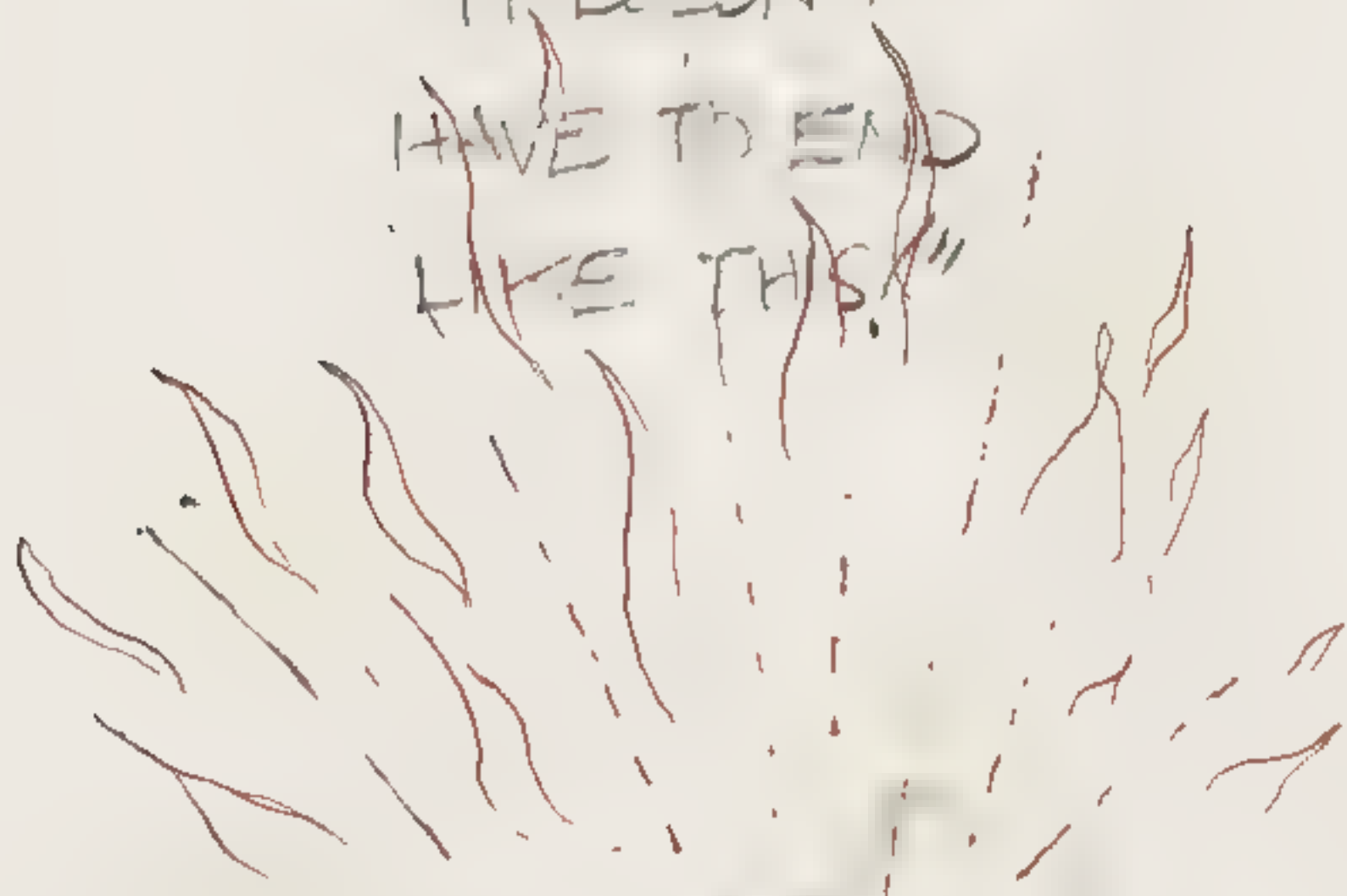
Laird. Only then, and not before, was the suffering of his enemy terminated and the creature allowed to drop to the rain and blood soaked grass on which it had danced these last awful minutes.

Its murderous readjustments completed, the costume opened its various slits and slowly disgorged Henry's enemy, now only a shapeless, glistening redness, washing itself carefully in the pouring rain after it did so. When it was entirely free of all traces of its recent tenant, and not before, it slithered smoothly over to Henry's curled and shivering legs, very much as a cat will work its way to the side of a beloved master, and, snuggling close to him, waited to see what he wanted to do next. †

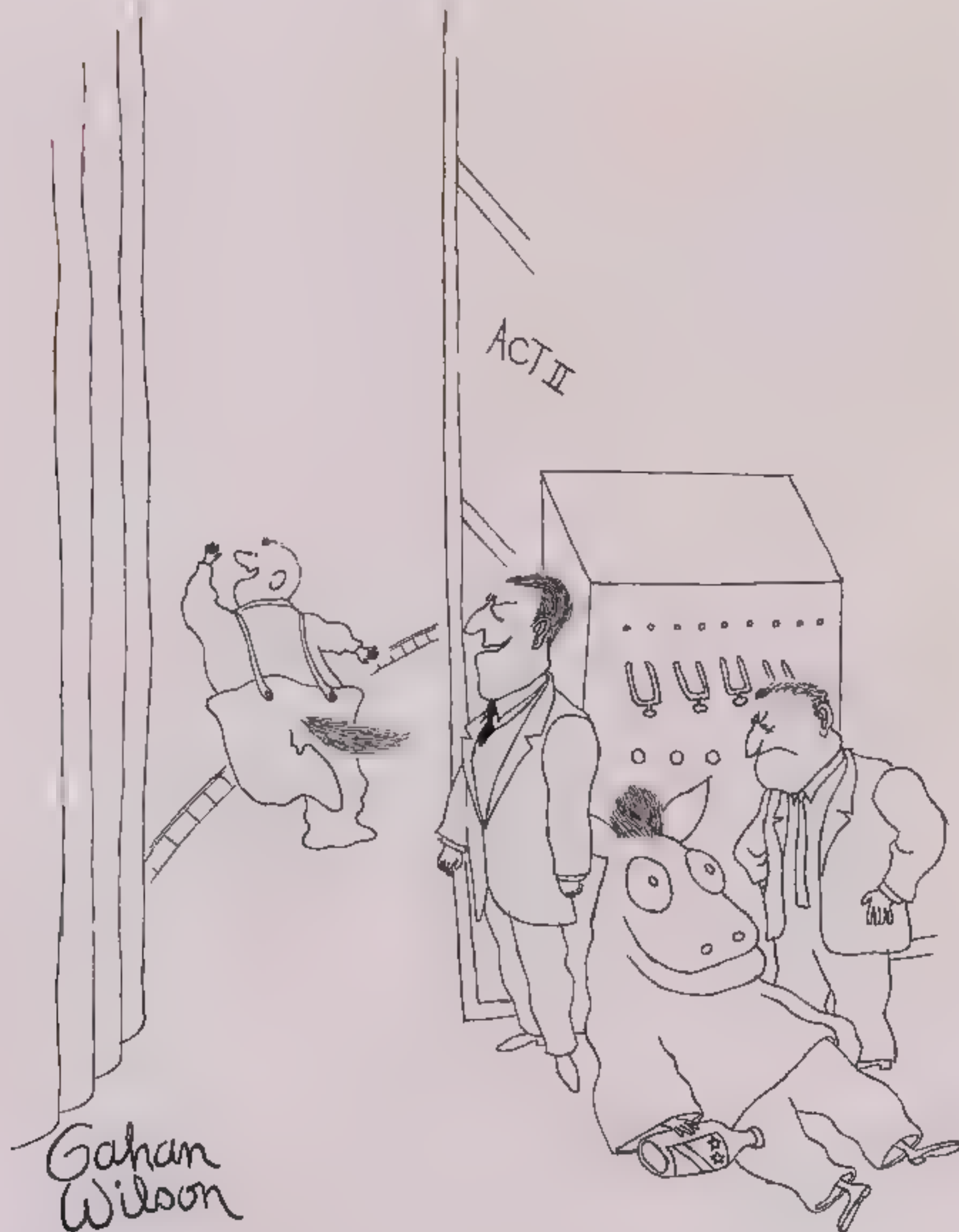


:

"IT DOESN'T
HAVE TO END
LIKE THIS."



PLAYBOY



"THERE GOES A REAL TROOPER,"



APPRECIATION and BIOGRAPHY by

GARY GROTH

Gahan Wilson defies categorization. Gahan Wilson is arguably the most biting and bracing cartoonist appearing in *Playboy*. He is an absurdist and a moralist, satirist and gag cartoonist, all rolled into one. His imagination is too perverse, his humor too elusive to be interpreted as rigidly partisan or ideological. His work is fueled as much by a bemused—indeed, one might say, a blithe—spirit as it is by outrage. He is equally at home with the frivolous as he is with the profound. The adjective *macabre*, having attached itself to him like a barnacle, is unhelpful; it succeeds only in pigeonholing a protean vision too reductively. Yes, his take on the world is dark, even morbid, but it's also droll and mischievous. He has a penchant for drawing and a deeply rooted love of monsters, ghouls, vampires, aliens and their ilk, but his cartoons stick in the memory, or the throat, because they resonate with what we see or know or experience every day; after we laugh at one of them—whether it depicts the hapless equanimity with which a couple barbecuing in their backyard see a mushroom cloud in the distance or a man entering a taxi festooned with just as many irritatingly admonishing signs as the interior of the cab—we can't help but shake our heads at the deeper truth of it. He has, through hundreds of cartoons, constructed a world that is eerily familiar, unsettlingly recognizable and lethally consistent, a fun house mirror of a world we all live in.

Above: Gahan Wilson, 1967.

Opposite: Unpublished cartoon, no date.



OK 8/12
hmc

Above: Unpublished cartoon, no date.

Many of his targets are the usual suspects: consumerism, corporate ruthlessness, the medical and legal professions, politicians, domestic relationships, greed, authoritarianism, pomposity, and, at the farther end of the spectrum, war and ecological genocide. But just because he tackles the big subjects, don't believe for one minute that he is above stooping to depicting children as malevolent monsters and weebegone nuisances or portraying the elderly as wrinkled little gargoyles clinging to the exclusive privileges they have accrued over the years (and years and years). The most vile of man's follies are grist for his mill; by making them look ludicrous and risible, he refuses to even dignify the horrors of Nazism and potential nuclear armageddon and its perpetrators. Accusations of bad taste are trumped, as always, by a higher morality.

None of this would register as funny were it not for Wilson's draw-

ing, each contemporary character an archetype of ordinariness. His cartoons are populated by an oddball mélange of hapless bystanders, smug know-it-alls, humiliated victims, pranksterish goofballs, clueless saps, smirking hotshots, happy-go-lucky bean counters, and predatory businessmen. Not to mention the mad scientist or two, the monsters and aliens, and pop culture icons (like Dick Tracy and Sherlock Holmes). He is a master of conception and staging, but the crux of his artistry resides in the faces of his characters, whose expressions are rendered in a traditional cartooning idiom that is exquisitely exaggerated but genuinely moving. These faces convey a fearful and discombobulated response to the bewildering and unnerving circumstances they usually find themselves in. One can see the influences of Basil Wolverton and Chester Gould most pronouncedly in his faces, but there's also something in them that goes deeper—a spontaneous and universally understood reaction to a world becoming increasingly unknowable and terrifying. Wilson traces this propensity to his Depression-era childhood:



"I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU FOLKS FOR INVITING ME
INTO YOUR LIVINGROOM..."

41E ZINC
27 PICAS WIDE
FLUSH MT

I was sitting on the floor and it was in this apartment building that my parents lived in, which was a very nice, sort of a middle class apartment—proper and nicely maintained; one of my first female interests was little Anne Foster and she and I were playing. I looked up at the Fosters and my parents and possibly some other people—they were a bunch of adults, sitting around, drinking, talking with each other, and I looked at them from one to the other in growing—I don't know what—horror, I guess—because I realized all of them were afraid. All of them had these looks of absolute panic and cold fear in their eyes. They were intensely disgusted. And I realized all my grown-ups were terrified. It was just an amazing thing.

It was an interesting perspective to see the Depression for me, since all these people did hang on to their occupations and they were going up, they were rising up, they had

Above: Unpublished cartoon, no date.



"I don't think the hard drugs are the
 same as the hard drugs!"

Handwritten signature/initials

all the middle class prejudices and so on and in this apartment building some of the wives had had to take in sewing, that kind of thing, and the humiliation was unbearable. It was just awful. I remember the most spectacular horror show I ever saw was, I was walking along and I looked up and I saw one of the neighbors and he had "Will take any kind of work" written on a piece of paper. He was holding it up to his chest, and he looked down, he saw me and he blanched and he *ran* from me, this little kid, you know?

Opposite: Unpublished cartoon, no date.

Wilson's personal tastes have always gravitated toward the more outré forms of pop culture, and his mode of expression has been shaped by movies, comics, and fiction, but the sensibility that animates Gahan Wilson's art and to which his technique is its servant, came from observing life. It's this rare combination that gives his work its unique and irreducible power.

Gahan Wilson was a child of the Great Depression, born February 18, 1930, in Evanston, Illinois, an outlier of Chicago. He was declared still born by the doctor who delivered him—"born dead" is how Wilson prefers to put it, and clearly in its good-natured morbidity, a portent of a career to come—and plunged into a basin of ice water to resuscitate him. He was named Gahan after his mother, Miriam, whose maiden name was Gahan. Both his parents had dabbled in art before settling down to the more traditional American pursuits of business careers and building a dysfunctional family. Allen Barnum Wilson—his middle name came from his uncle, Gahan Wilson's great uncle, P.T. Barnum—and Miriam Gahan had met at the department store Carson Pirie Scott, where they both worked, he as a floorwalker—"He would prowl the floor and help people out and keep an eye on everything and make sure it was all going smoothly"—and she in the publicity department in an active role orchestrating advertising and marketing (at a time when it was unusual for women to attain that high a corporate position). About his mother, Wilson said, "She was quite an exceptional character."

His parents had an interest in art and drew as well; according to Wilson, his father "had a fantastic eye for art—he was very good, he was very talented. He never really got into it, but every so often he would do a drawing and you could see they were good, he really had it. He just never worked at it." Wilson did not think that his mother, on the other hand, was quite as talented as his father. "I hate to say it, but I don't think she had the thing that you see. And I think he did." She attended the Art Institute of Chicago, and "did these very capable oil paintings";

Right: Unpublished cartoon, no date.



OK
Pb
m

he described the few pieces of her work that had been, somehow, preserved as “Aubrey Beardsley decadent *Yellow Book* fantasy kind of drawings and they weren’t bad at all.” Prior to Wilson’s birth, she had a nervous breakdown “and it all went to hell; she dropped it and that was that.”

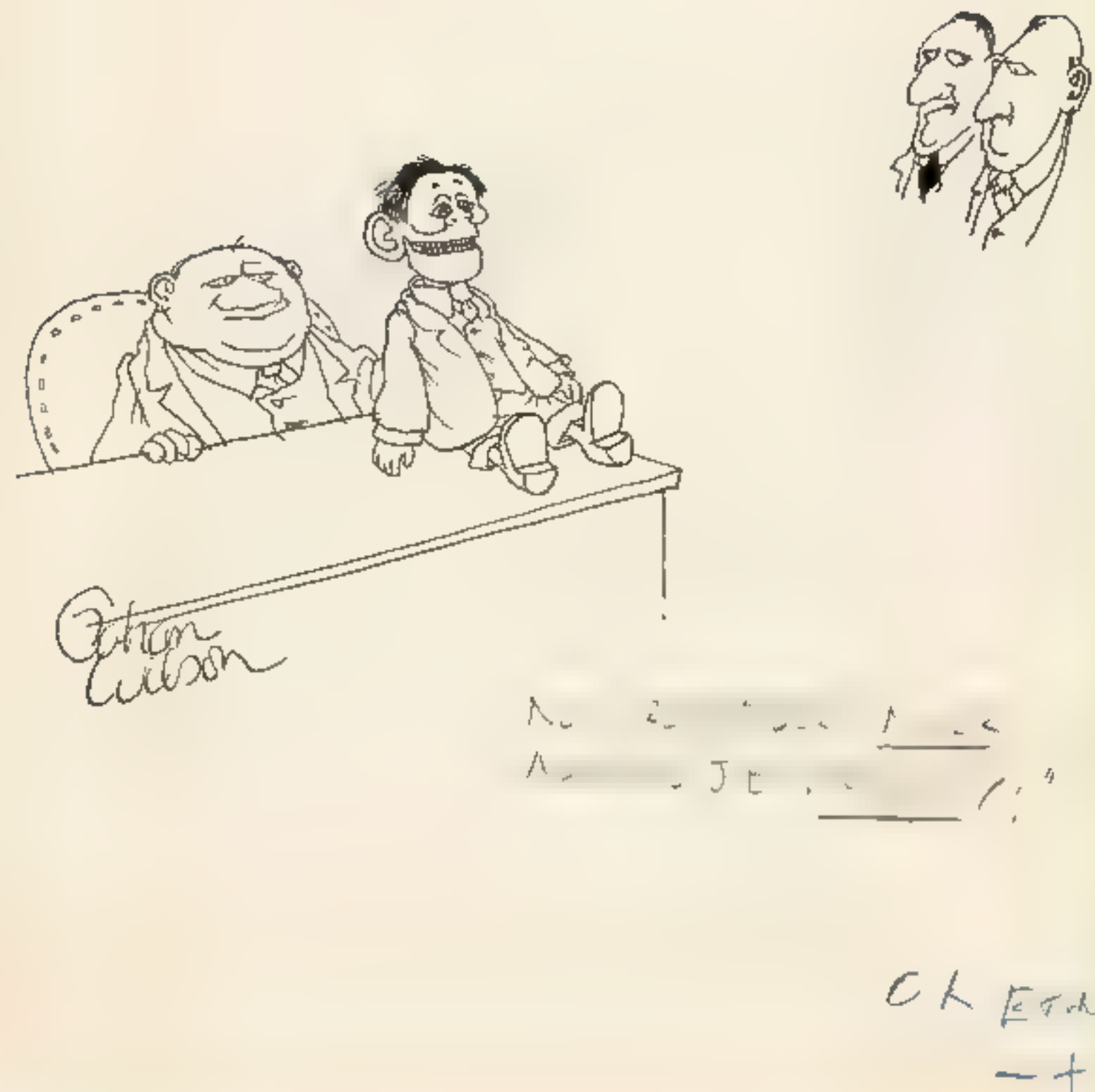
Carson’s, not atypically of department stores at the time, had a small in-house art gallery; Allen Wilson persuaded Carson’s to let him run the art gallery in addition to performing his managerial work, and “rounded up some of the very best painters of the period. He turned it from this cruddy little heap of stuff into a very formidable gallery. My father brought to the Midwest for the first time a whole bunch of people who are now highly respected.” The gallery was so successful that it began to attract wealthy patrons, one of whom was Ralph Norton, an industrialist who was interested in the fine arts and was amassing a sizeable collection of paintings and sculpture and who, because of their mutual love in art, became a lifelong friend of Wilson’s parents.

Allen and Miriam wanted to parlay the success of the gallery in Carson's to a vocation more to their liking, so they quit the department store and launched their own business: they traveled around the country setting up and promoting art exhibitions and selling the work of the artists. "It was very nervy of them and very sweet and very touching," Wilson felt; "An incredibly romantic notion." This evidently proved catastrophic from an entrepreneurial point of view if not a romantic one, and, according to Wilson, they "were at a loss—and crushed." Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending upon whether your sympathies lie with idealism or pragmatism, Norton offered Allen a job at his Acme Steel Company, which was one of the 300 biggest industrial corporations in America, where he initially worked in research and development. He was able to channel his ingenuity into creating industrial and consumer products made out of steel, eventually segueing into becoming, in Wilson's words, a "brilliant inventor." (Gahan's first published cartoon appeared in the journal of Acme Steel during WWII and featured Hitler and Tojo being crushed by tons of the company's steel.) Allen Wilson moved up the corporate ladder and, in due time, became vice president of the company. According to Gahan, this was both a blessing and a curse; although his job at Acme provided financial security, it misdirected his creative impulses into a utilitarian and arid direction that proved artistically frustrating. As vice president, Gahan said, "He was, I think, quite miserable because the other executives were just har-har-har-dee-har kinda guys, really terrible people."

Wilson has theorized that his own dark brand of humor may have benefited from growing up a single child in a home of alcoholic parents who were, he adds, also "cracked."

It is God's truth that one thing growing up in such an environment does is to make you feel the world is crazy, which I'd still think,

Below: Unpublished cartoon, no date.



Opposite: Unpublished cartoon, no date

but it's very discomfoting to be a kid and have parents acting in a totally erratic fashion. It was just that they went nuts every night! They just got drunk. It was very disturbing because you're looking to your parents as some sort of example and they're supposedly the stable element. With my father it was complicated because he also had a [John] McCain-style rage in him which I really never did figure out what it was all about. All of a sudden he'd go totally nuts, so it could turn from an ordinary situation into an absolute melee. It was very chaotic, very distressing. But I think it is quite helpful as far as being an artist is concerned, and humorous. S.J. Perelman had a wonderful line: 'One necessity for a humorist is an unhappy childhood.' And I think that's likely true because humor is based on that sort of thing, on 'Isn't it weird how things don't work out.'

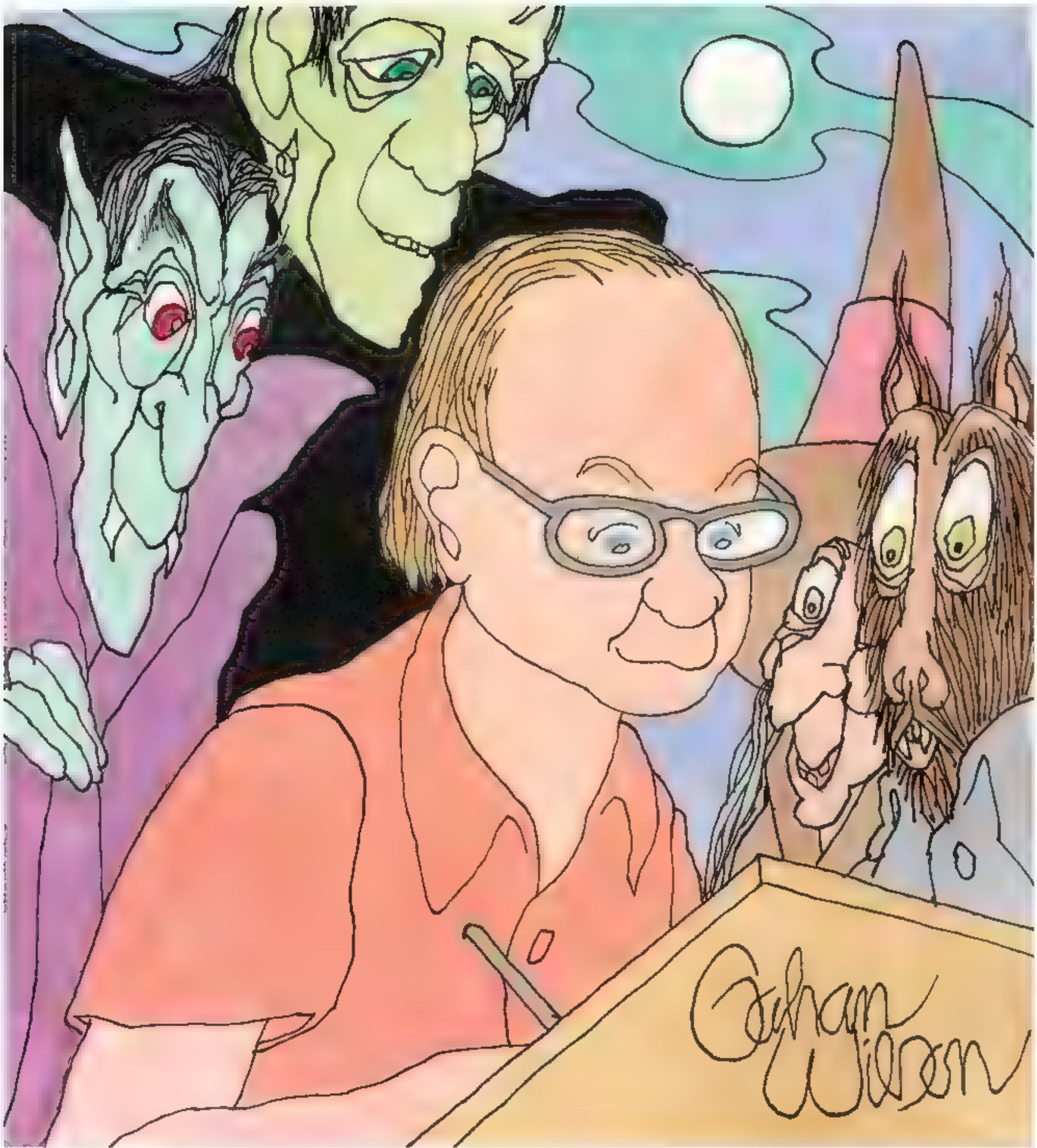
His childhood appeared not to be entirely without its pleasures, however. He doodled from as young an age as he can remember and "was constantly, absolutely determined to be a cartoonist of some kind or other from, oh, I dunno, way back when." "I was," he wrote, "frankly, an odd little kid who was always lured by the fantastic and the bizarre." That meant that he grew up reading and savoring Chester Gould's *Dick Tracy* ("It was very dark and horrible; bodies rotted and wounds suppurated and so on. As a young macabre kid I dug that and also admired that he'd gotten away with it"), reveled in the eccentricity of Bill Holman's *Smokey Stover* ("really quite nutty"), Harold Gray's grim *Little Orphan Annie* (which had "all kinds of really spooky stuff going on, Daddy Warbucks was a merciless son of a bitch, and there were terrible deaths and people dying quite horrendously"), and the sublime beauty of George Herriman's *Krazy Kat* ("It's just beautiful; you look at it and it stands up to the hard eye, it's just so exquisitely done: technique, layout, every subtlety of the combination of the visual and the literary"). He grew up in the golden age of radio drama, and was captivated by shows like *The Shadow*, *The Inner Sanctum*, and Arch Oboler's *Lights Out* ("A mind blower; the guy was mad!").

He was also the perfect age to enjoy comic books, which he devoured when they began appearing on newsstands in the mid-to-late 1930s. "I would buy comics and I would go to the Evanshire Drug Store and they had, rather unwisely, put the comic rack nearby the soda counter, so you could furtively pluck a comic from the magazine rack and read it as you had your soda, then put it back on the rack. I read about the early doings of Superman and Batman and their multitudes of spectacular fiends and loved every crowded panel. Kids would make a library out of the place. As long as you bought a soda," he adds, "they didn't mind

PLAYBOY
S.B.I. #6



"Now HERE'S THE SAME ATOMIC BLAST CLOSE UP,"



Above: Self portrait, 2008.

at all.” By the time he was in middle school, he was drawing comics and, with the encouragement of his teacher, drew a strip for one of his classes called “Drippy Dan the Detective” that was pinned on a board called an *Acta Diurna* (“Daily Doings”). “This is the first time I’ve thought of it,” he reminisced. “He had a Sherlock Holmes kind of deerstalker, only a little floppier, and I realize now that it’s very much like the hat that Nuts wore. This is the first time I realized how I created the chapeau there. It started with Drippy Dan.”

Wilson was also fascinated by movies, and though his home life was turbulent, his creative and academic life was eventful, even thriving. In his late teens, he managed to take a trip to Hollywood where he spent a week or two visiting the studio sets and watching the moviemaking process—thanks to Don Maxwell, the editor of the *Chicago Tribune*. Maxwell was a neighbor of the Wilson's, living in the apartment above them, and he took a liking to the young Gahan. When he learned of Gahan's interest in movies, "he did an extraordinarily generous thing: He equipped me with letters of introduction and all kinds of bonafides" that gave him entrée to the studios. "I was just treated like a prince," Wilson recalls. "I saw all kinds of wonderful things, met astounding celebrities. I remember being on the set of one of those Fred Astaire movies and they had all the regulars. It was fascinating because there they were running through a rehearsal, doing their lines, yackety yackety yackety, and then some director or something came on, stepped up to the platform where the set was and I realized that all of them were dinky little people. The director would tower over them! I think it was part of their charm. They were like china dolls. It was extraordinary. It was a terrific trip. Absolutely staggering."

He also, in his late teens, attended the Todd School for Boys in Woodstock, Illinois, whose headmaster, Roger Hill, was a notoriously innovative educator. The Todd School also happened to be Orson Welles's high school alma mater, where he practically took over the school's theatrical department from the age of 12 to 16 in that precociously Wellesian way of his. Twenty years later, he made one of his periodic visits to the school and Wilson was lucky enough to be among the students who dined with him one evening. "I'm telling you," Wilson said, "sitting at a table with Orson Welles at its head was a magnificent, thrilling experience. He would just entertain the heck out of us."

His excursion to Hollywood served the purpose of dashing any aspirations he may have had to become a film director. He recognized that he did not quite have the necessary mettle: "I loved it. I was fascinated by it, but my fears were confirmed. I realized it was one mother tough industry, and you had to be a lot ballsier than I am to have any thought of cutting it there. I knew that was the case. I wasn't brokenhearted or anything, but what I had suspected turned out to be true, and so I thought, 'All right, then, fuck it. Cartoonist it is, then.'" In the event, film's loss was cartooning's gain.

While still in high school, Gahan attended the American Academy of Art in order to further his goal to become a cartoonist. This is a commercial art school that taught summer classes, and while "it had a bunch of very good teachers who were real pros, including professional cartoonists and guys in various areas of commercial art, they didn't give me what I wanted, which was technique and how to really,

Following spread: Unpublished cartoon, no date.



1-20



Graham Wilson

really, really work with paint and so on.” In short, the curriculum wasn’t intense enough to satisfy his needs. After graduating from high school, he attended the Art Institute of Chicago, which was more to his liking. “I took what was then described as a fine arts course, which was marvelous. It was total no-nonsense work. We just drew and painted and painted and drew, and did graphics, and that’s all we did. The only academic course was history, which was very well done by a woman called Kathleen Blackshear, who did a swell job, with slides and a lecture and an idea of art history. So, you were exposed to a tremendous variety of what you could do. You did serious stuff, you did your life class charcoal things and you did oil paintings and you did etching and you did lithographs. The one hugely important thing is that a lot of the student body was made up of guys and women from the GI Bill. They were, of course, grown-ups. They’d been through a war, so you didn’t have any clowning around. It was wonderful.”

After he completed a four-year course at the Art Institute, the Korean War reared its head in the form of a draft. Wilson was skeptical of our military involvement in Korea, but not unutterably opposed to it; as he put it, “It was nothing like Vietnam, where I felt great outrage.” Still, he knew that the war in Korea “was just god awful. It was a terrible, horrible, tough place—summer and winter. It was an extremely brutal war; lots of suffering. You really didn’t want to go there if you could possibly avoid it.” So, in order to preempt his being drafted into the Army or the Marines, Wilson enlisted in the Air Force, which, he says, “turned out to be a wise move.” He felt that the Air Force was the least dangerous branch of the service—“No matter what happens, if you’re a regular Air Force person and you find yourself besieged by the enemy, then you have probably lost the war because they are very safely ensconced” — and, after basic training, landed in Amarillo, Texas, where he immediately began to lay “the groundwork for being a cartoonist in the paper there.” Before he could even get started, though, luck in the form of a health problem cut his military career short. He got a staph infection on his leg and spent two months in the hospital: “More and more, they figured, ‘Well, this guy’s got this thing and it’s liable to flare up at any time and therefore he’s a risk.’” The United States military does not like enlisted men who are risks, and duly discharged Wilson, freeing him to pursue a career as a cartoonist. The military’s loss, etc.

Next stop: Greenwich Village. This was the heyday of magazine gag cartoonists. All the general interest magazines featured cartoonists: *The Saturday Review*, *The Saturday Post*, *Look*, *Esquire*, *Life*, *Collier’s*, and the top of the heap, *The New Yorker*. Among the many cartoonists Wilson followed and admired were Peter Arno, Charles Addams, George Price, William Steig, Saul Steinberg, and Shel Silverstein. His parents gave him enough money to live in Greenwich Village for six months;

PLAYBOY



POSITION AS ADICATED BY STAT
ON SEPARATE ART

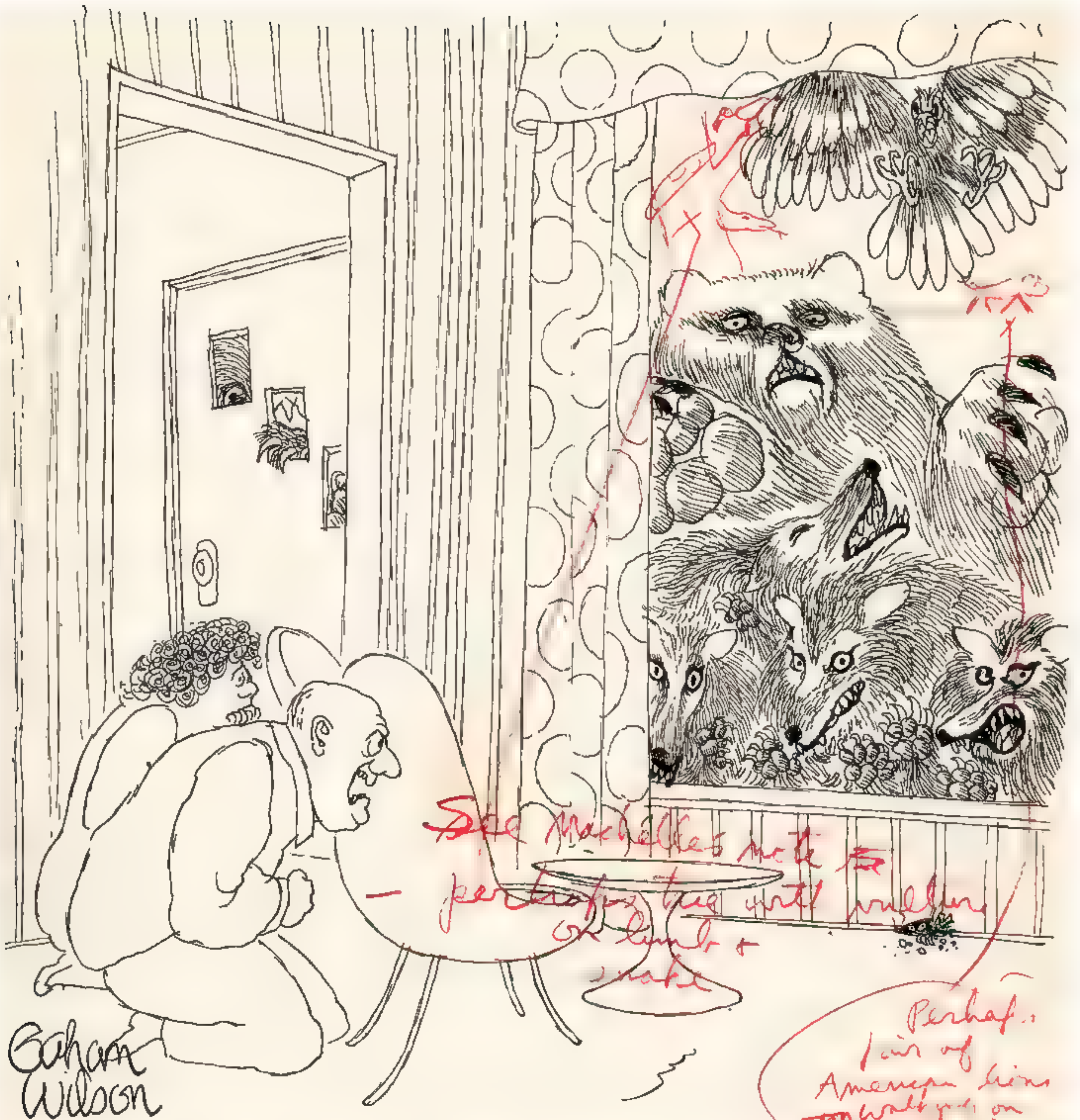
76R
K. E. W. E.
1. 4. 7.

6670

OK

he moved there in 1954 or 1955, and began pounding the pavement, visiting every magazine and showing samples. "At that time," Wilson relates, "there were a million magazines, ranging from big, big, big magazines down to little, teeny, tacky, crummy magazines, who all bought cartoons. I was able to sell to these little tacky crummy markets enough cartoons to support myself in short order. It was a very meager income. It was really a bohemian life. I mean, the lights, the electricity would be turned off, the phone would be turned off. I experienced how society treats really poor persons; it was a very interesting experience, besides being very rough on me, I'm here to tell you! The Village was at its incredible peak. I ran with the artists pretty much—not cartoonists, but artists from the Art Institute and was accepted by them. It was all these magnificent bars and it was just wild and quite wonderful. Nothing had been exaggerated." Wilson has a favorite anecdote that sums up the attitude he discovered living in the Village that liberated him from the vicissitudes of material depredation:

Above: "Sherlock" original art for
December, 1959. (p. 36)



Graham Wilson

"I KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN IF THOSE DAMNED CONSERVATIONISTS HAD THEIR WAY!"

OK (60)

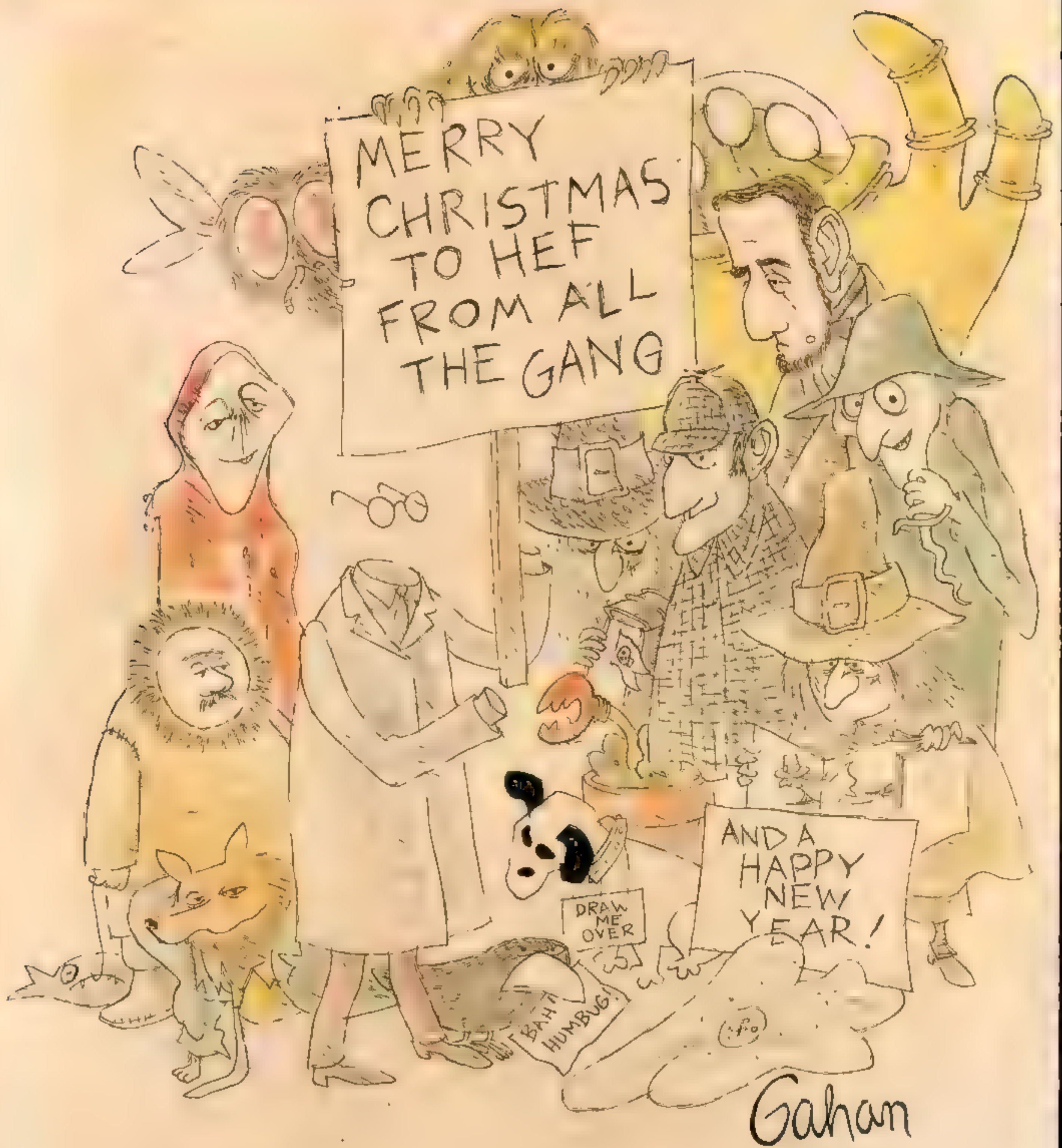
7/10/18

I had a friend who was a Japanese painter. He and I were going to go out on the town and get drunk and try to pick up girls. We were having a snack at his place. He had cooked in a frying pan some kind of half-assed Japanese stir fry and we're sitting there eating it in the slum he's got, overlooking, from a distance, Washington Square, and all of a sudden we hear this loud talking in the little dump next door, and it escalates. It started out relatively mild with curses and shouts, then it progressed. It was summer and we were eating and staring out, and you could hear this escalating fight, and it got increasingly hideous. You could hear *KLOOM!*, somebody hitting a table somewhere. And then something was thrown hard against the wall that made this great *SMACK!* And the woman shut up, the son of a bitch must have really given her a whack, and he *SLAMS* the door and he goes down the hall and down the steps. And she's crying. We sit there and chew a bit more. And my friend sighed and shook his head and said, "It must be horrible living like this...if you're ordinary people." And he was right. It would be horrible living like this if you were ordinary people, but we weren't ordinary people. I thought, "God, he's nailed the whole bohemian shtick." It's what separates the bohemian from the middle class. And I am a bohemian. It wasn't a humiliation — you chose this, so it didn't bother you in the least.

Opposite. Rough for June, 1972. (p. 296)

The editors he showed his work to generally liked his cartoons, laughed as they read them — and handed them right back to him. "These are great cartoons, kid," he was told by one magazine editor, "but our readers wouldn't understand them." They were too weird for the genteel readership of the general interest magazines like *Esquire* and too complicated for the dimwitted readership of the men's magazines like *True*. He finally visited the Ziff Davis Publishing Company, and began selling cartoons to their two science fiction fantasy pulps *Amazing Stories* and *Fantastic Stories*. They paid him \$7.50 per cartoon. They were among the lesser cartooning venues available at the time, but they represented a foot in the professional door.

His break came when the cartoon editor at *Collier's*, Bernie Williams, who had rejected his work, moved on to work for *Look* magazine. An editor by the name of Bill Chessman filled in for Williams as cartoon editor until *Collier's* could find someone who knew something about cartoons. According to Wilson, because Chessman "didn't understand cartooning, didn't realize that my stuff wouldn't be understood by the readers out there, he laughs, says this is great stuff, and then he bought



a bunch of cartoons.” It required someone who naïvely relied only on his own taste rather than someone trained to anticipate the dumbed-down taste of the magazine’s readership to appreciate Wilson’s off-kilter brand of humor. Luckily, once Wilson’s work was being bought, the official cartoon editor who took over from Chessman continued buying his cartoons. Then, the circle of professional conformity closed in Wilson’s favor; as he described it: “When the cartoons showed up in *Collier’s*, Bernie Williams, the guy who had left *Collier’s*, saw them appear, apparently, although he never said it in so many words, he must have figured, ‘Well, if it’s in *Collier’s*, obviously it’s got to be acceptable material.’ So, he started buying my work and that’s how I got into the big time.”

By this time, Hugh Hefner had been publishing *Playboy* for nearly four years. Hefner was himself a cartoon aficionado (and a frustrated cartoonist) and the magazine published cartoons every issue; yet Wilson never approached them. It had never occurred to him to submit his work to the magazine; Wilson hadn’t intended to show his work to *Playboy*, and his first trip to the *Playboy* offices in 1957 was in fact due to a case of mistaken identity!

In 1956 the great cartoonist and editorial wunderkind Harvey Kurtzman quit the magazine he created in 1952 over an ownership dispute. His next port of call was *Trump*, a satirical magazine he created that Hefner published in 1957. It was this magazine, and Kurtzman, to whom Wilson intended to submit his work. Instead, he met Hugh M. Hefner and began a profoundly fruitful personal and professional association that has served them both well to this day.

Our interview with Gahan Wilson begins with him describing his first encounter with Hugh Hefner—part screwball comedy, part film noir.

Opposite. Christmas card from Wilson to Hugh Hefner, 1961 (unpublished).



"I'VE JUST HAD THE MOST TERRIBLE DREAM!"

Caham Wilson

H

INTERVIEW with

GAHAN WILSON

I'd like you to relate how you and Hugh Hefner hooked up. As I understand it, you wanted to submit work to Trump, the magazine Hefner financed that Harvey Kurtzman edited after he quit Mad.

Yeah, *Trump* was this incredible, slick, beautifully produced magazine, which was a humor magazine, and they had drafted—stolen away—from *Mad*, Harvey Kurtzman, who created and edited it. I saw it and I just thought, “Well, I have got to be in this magazine, no two ways about it.” I visited my parents in Chicago every Christmas and spent about a week with them and then I'd go back to New York. So, I called *Trump* up and set up an appointment during that period. I turned up with a bunch of stuff—a little dossier—all set, ready to show them. I turned up and there was the receptionist and I said, “Hello, I'm Gahan Wilson and I have an appointment.”

And she said, “Oh, yes, yes, yes....”

Did you think you had an appointment with Harvey Kurtzman?

Well, then I said, “With Harvey Kurtzman.”

And she said, “Oh no, no, no no.”

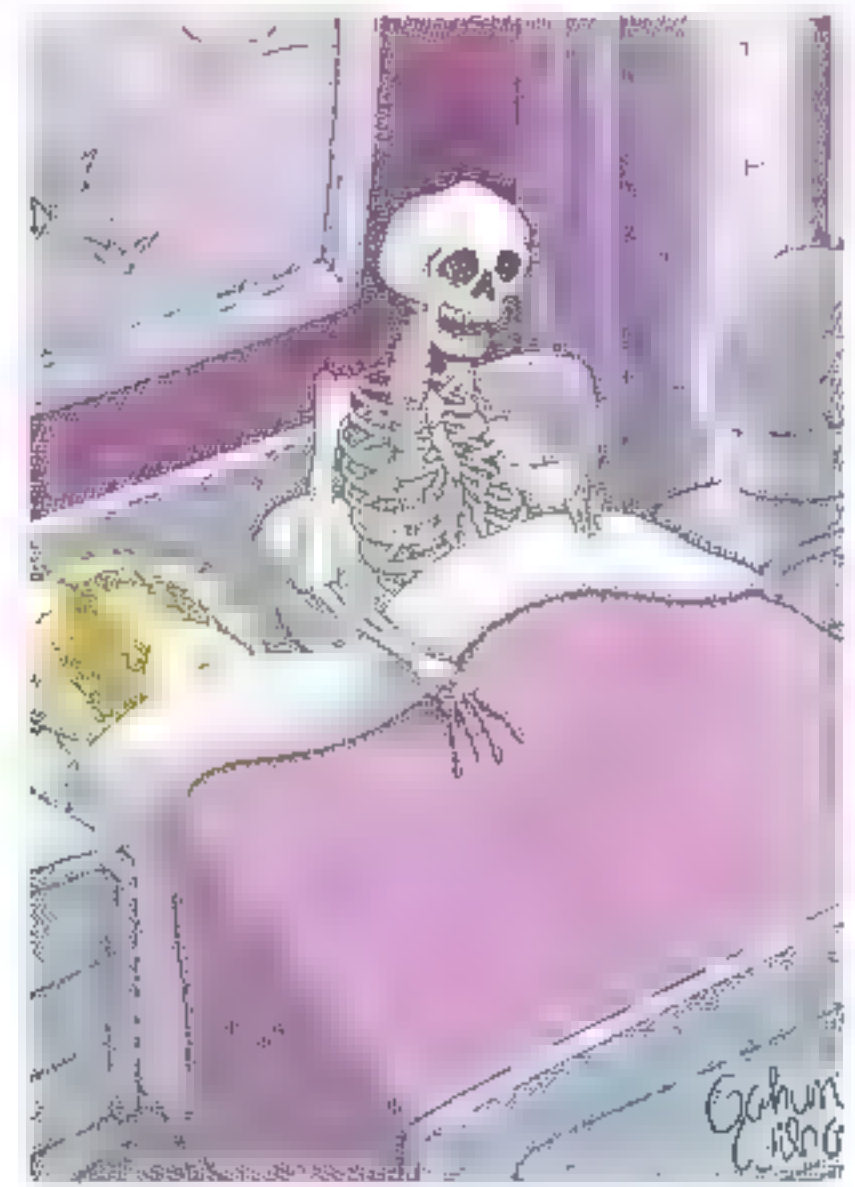
And I said, “But he's the editor of *Trump*, isn't he?”

And then she said, “Yes, yes. But the offices of *Trump* are in New York City.” And so I just sort of gaped at her and I was flabbergasted. I had never felt that... and then this guy came up to me and said, “Hello, I'm Art Paul and Hef would like to see you.” And then he led me through this little door—the whole thing was in this very nice brownstone....

A brownstone is actually a house, a home?

Yeah, they come in varying sizes. It was an elegant old place that somebody had and I'm sure it had gone through numerous transformations. Hefner bought it and fixed it up.

So, I followed Art who pointed me up a narrow staircase and I went up into this little room with one light only on the desk, and the shades



The point of view shifts slightly from the rough to the finish; the woman is cringing more, and the moan is now obscured by her shoulder, which accentuates the frightened eyes. “I’m making it very simple so that you see the shoulder and then the eyes looking over the shoulder in great alarm.” The skeleton is less grotesque, more relaxed in the finished version. “He’s sitting like a person is when they wake up. Not fully conscious. That added to the humor of it. Instead of making him horrific, he’s this skeleton that just woke up who’s a little drowsy, and not quite organized because he’s not quite fully awake yet.” (p. 467)



The cowboys in the rough are in a medium shot; in the finish, they are moved to the foreground and in a closer shot, but the real change was in the placement of the furniture. the room looks like a conventional living room in the rough, but in the finish, it recedes into the background in a way reminiscent of a Western landscape from a John Ford movie and not a realistic depiction of a living room. "The mesas and so on, stretching out—that's the joke. It's like some cowboy set it up, and it's not a cozy place. Great big huge living room. Enormous living room. I remember the first time I went out West, it struck me as hilariously funny that everything was named after furniture. They'll have the Devil's Seat. You can see why they fell into this pattern of naming it after furniture because it's this vast, totally flat floor, featureless—certainly to the Eastern eye, featureless, although the Westerner would pick out little arroyos and mesas and things like that—but they are exactly like furniture." (p. 470)



pulled, and there was Hefner. He was speaking on the phone and he smiled at me and shook my hand and waved me down to a chair and I sat and he said—and I quote, [mimicking his voice]—"Well," he said, "it's a very good story, very good story. Very well written and well composed, we like it very much. Very good writing, but the problem is that it's anti sin and we're pro-sin." [Groth laughs] I succeeded in not gaping at him and he went on saying nice things to this fellow, quite soothing, and then he hung up and stood up and he reached out a hand again, shook it real firmly and said, "I've been waiting for you." And that's how we got started.

You were nonplussed because you hadn't heard anything like that from an editor.

Well, yeah. I'd usually get to see some sub-editor or something like that. This was just incredible. It was very foolish of me not to have gone to *Playboy* before or sent stuff off to *Playboy* before because he and A.C. Spector—sky—who was quite a figure among the intelligentsia; a brilliant man and a sweetheart once you got to know him—had this policy. They printed wonderful authors there, had really good fantasy and science

fiction stuff as a regular item, and were the first magazine ever to pay decent amounts of money for their genre. So, they really rose to the occasion. So, I should have thought, “Well, for pete’s sake, they print that kind of stuff, they should go for my cartoons.”

Why didn’t you?

Well, I didn’t because the cartoons mostly were these clever little sexy cartoons and I just didn’t realize—didn’t make the connection. It was just dumb of me.

I became a regular with *Playboy* and eventually Hef moved to another building and that’s where he had the apartment on the top floor. This is maybe five years later. He was—and is—a terrific editor, he’s just marvelous, brilliant, it’s awesome how good he is. He writes in the bottom of the thing a little something in red pencil, signed “HMH, full color, full page.” Sometimes he’ll add a comment and if he does, it’s always very apt or very useful.

A few years later he moved to a larger building with his lodgings at the top and around noon he was always, as far as I’ve known him, a night person—he’d descend the staircase from this apartment and I remember watching this from this little desk I was at, doing some special spread at various occasions. The editors’ offices lined the walls and he’d come down in a sort of trance, staring vaguely in front of him. As he came to the door of this editor’s office, if the editor had something to show Hef, he’d be waiting by the door and he’d jump out and he’d present it to him. Hefner would look at it instantly with intent, amazing, eagle-eyed focus and make quick decisions, talking very quietly. Then he’d go into a trance again and move on until the next editor grabbed him and do the same thing—instantly focused. I thought, “He’s a fucking general!” It was amazing.

It’s downright scary to see him at work, because he just focuses with *astounding* intensity on whatever it is that he’s looking at, and he’s just looking at *that*, everything else doesn’t exist. He takes a detailed interest in *everything*. So it’s very, very, very intense. That’s why it’s usually right, he’s really thinking it over.

I guess that’s why he was able to do what he did.

Yeah, and then when you see him switch from one thing to another, and go blank in between, you know you’re looking at something kindred to Napoleon [*laughter*] or all these other characters who were handling incredibly complicated operations of one sort or another, but kept everything in order, but noticed everything. The brilliance of that kind of executive is that they have a sea of minutia, and it all has to work out, and everything really has to be noticed, although it *can’t* be—you’d have to be God in order to really take it all in. But they come

close to it, and he's one of them. I've thought now and then it would be fascinating to be in the war tent of some high-level thing, where you've got this bunch of super-duper pros, and there's all these guys out there, all these little maps and charts representing human beings, and they're trying to make it all work. 'Cause every one of those—you know, those are people, really.

That's an amazing facility.

It really is. It's a special knack. And sometimes at a magazine, you'll see it in a really good director at work. It's extraordinary, they're just taking everything in, and they notice every goddamn, teeny itty witsy stuff: all these people who are specialized and incredibly brilliant and talented and accurate and expert in every way, but they miss this thing in their little special zone—but the director spots it.

As a cartoonist, though, you must have something of that focus when you sit down and hunch over the drawing board to do one of these cartoons.

Yeah. This documentary they did recently was a shock to me because I'd been photographed many times — God knows how many — posing by a drawing board, supposedly working on something, and it was convincing. It looks like I'm working on something. But when I was filmed extensively for the documentary that director Steven-Charles Jaffe recently did of me called *Gahan Wilson: Born Dead, Still Weird*, he had the camera on me while I actually *was* working on something, and the intensity and focus was very akin to Hefner's. I saw myself for the first time, working, I was doing the same thing. I sometimes do some work and I'll just be exhausted and I'll think, "What the hell am I so tired about?" I understood after looking at that. I was just like a hawk — just on it, you know? — glaring at whatever the hell it is. So, that's a great insight into him.

You probably were 27 when you met Hefner. He must have been a little bit older than you—or was he?

Oh yeah.

Your first drawing appeared in December 1957. And then you've been in virtually every issue since then.

Yeah, he's made a sort-of point of that.

Hefner was aware of your work from Collier's?

Yeah, apparently. I was mostly in that magazine and in *Look*.

And so before you did your first drawing for Playboy and before you started being a regular in Playboy, what was the editorial discussion like? What did



he tell you that he wanted and what were the parameters?

No, no, nothing like that. I designed the works I submitted vertically—hoping for a full page—and just made them as good as I could. And that's all.

So once he accepted you into the fold, you were given as much freedom as you really wanted.

Oh, yes. I'd send in a bunch of the things, and hopefully he'd buy some.

Did you take into account, when you were drawing the cartoons, that you were drawing for Playboy? Did you draw differently for Playboy than you did for other magazines?

Well, what he gave me was this wonderful thing of being able to do full-color, with good reproduction, so I would work with the idea that I could pull off all kinds of subtle visual effects. Actually, that connects very much with being a director. A cartoon is just like a shot, and you light it and so on. Like, for example, if I'll have some sort of light source I'll make a little "x" where that light is outside the margins of the drawing, so the rays will come right. It's like lighting it. And then I costume



Hef suggests changing "doubt" to "paranoia," and Wilson moved "ennui" to the far left. "I think I probably did that because 'ennui' was a short word, and I figured why not let everybody have the whole word rather than puzzle over what the heck it said." (p. 474)

Part 2. ...
 large ...
 ... + ...
 ... as ...
 ...



"It is ...
 ...
 ..."

OK W/C
 ...
 14

the characters, and I do the sets, and the character faces, the whole thing. It's just like putting together a shot for a movie.

Tell me what the process was like. You would send a certain number of cartoons every month?

Not necessarily every month, sort of irregularly. Twice a month, sometimes. But it was always a steady income of stuff going in to him.

But you would send a batch? You wouldn't just send one.

Oh, yeah. Always send a batch.

How many would that be?

It would vary. It would go from a dozen, to 20, tops. Rarely more than that.

You were still living in Greenwich Village when you started contributing to Playboy.

Yeah.

What were your work habits like?

I had a marvelous fun stretch, because now I had this regular, reasonably reliable income, and I went over to England and I lived there for a stretch. And then I traveled over Europe. And of course the dollar was, at that point, extraordinary. It was wonderful.

How long did you do that?

That was about a year and a half. And it was just terrific.

And you were able to do that because of your Playboy income? You were able to draw your Playboy cartoons over there and send them over?

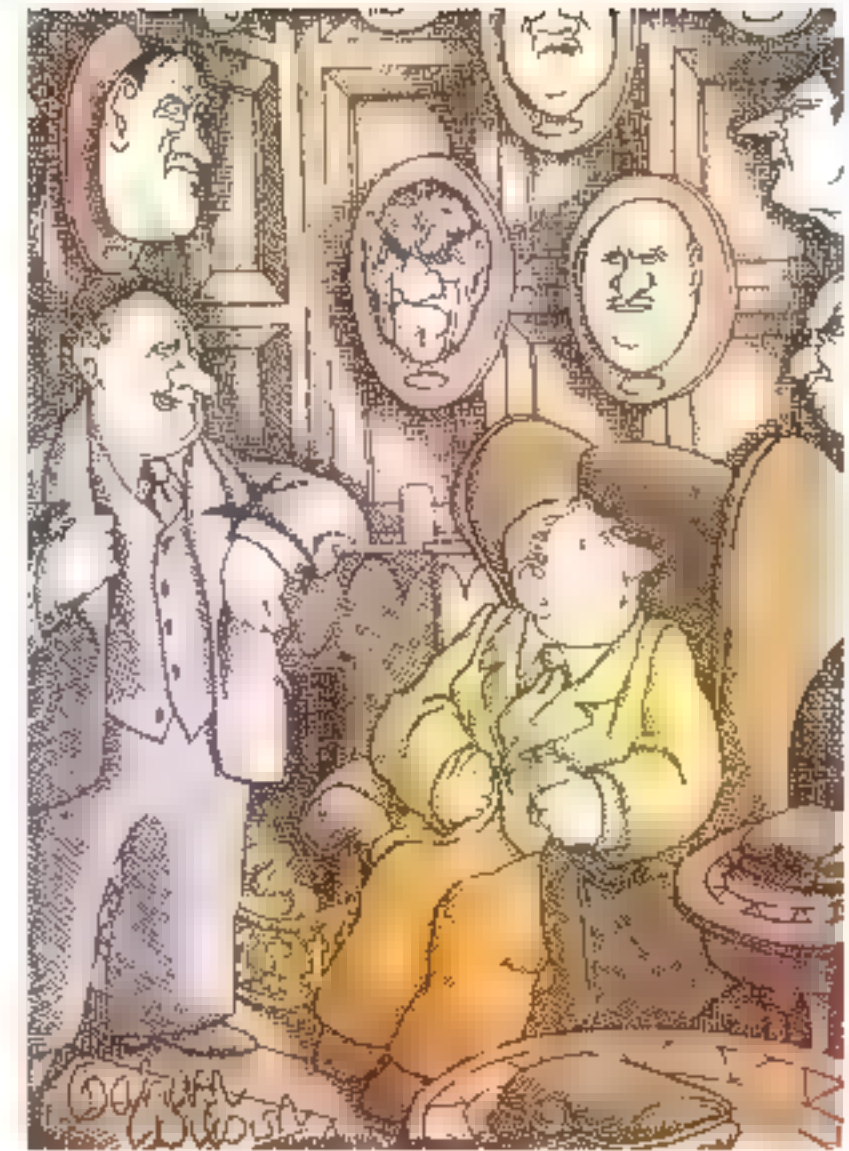
Yeah. It was just fabulous. And also American Express would have this setup—in those days, they no longer do it—where you could go to one of their offices and make that your mailing address and then, if you were in Country X, Town 1, you would say “Okay, I’m going to Country Y, Town 3, would you forward the mail there, please,” and they’d do it.

And that actually worked?

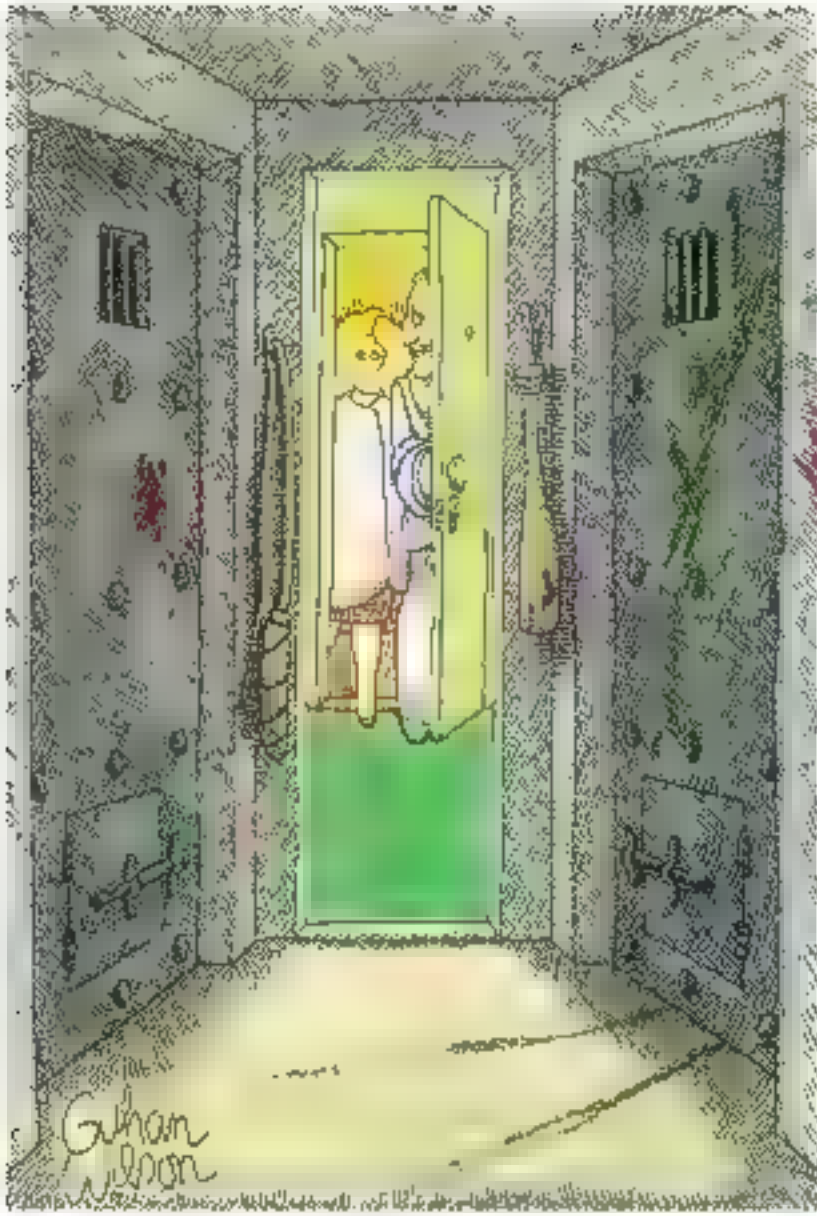
Yeah! I imagine it’d just be too much. But the combination of those things was fantastic. One of the smartest things I ever did. That way I just wandered around.

That sounds fantastic.

It was. It was just marvelous.



This was changed substantially between the rough and the finish. Hef suggests changing it from an office setting to an old-fashioned den of a house where trophies would be mounted on a wall and adding a fireplace. “I wanted to get the clubhouse atmosphere, somewhere in New York, a midtown place, with all of the paneling and whatnot. That was important. I was thinking just office, and so the other thing was to extend this other mood and the fireplace is appropriate for that.” The composition is changed so that both characters are facing the reader, allowing for a fuller facial expression on the character whose back is to us in the rough (p. 438).



A man is about to introduce his girl to his parents, and Hef suggests adding “dear” to the man’s line. “It heightens the nice intimacy between the couple, which is genuine, which therefore makes the contrast between it and the horrendous environment she’s about to be locked into.” In the finish, Wilson uses cross hatching and color on the sides of the room the couple are entering to pop out the central image of the couple walking through the door with the lighter color on the floor in front of the door serving as a bridge. “In the colored version, that was underlined by the same kind of emphasis, so she’s still in this relatively bright and normal entryway, and she has yet to come into this god-awful dungeon that awaits. And the interim area is exactly that, so you have a little bit on the floor, which ties the two together.” (p. 475)



Why did you ever come back?

I sometimes wonder [Laughter].

When you sent cartoons in, did you send finished cartoons or roughs?

Oh, roughs.

Then he would choose which ones he wanted, and you would finish them.

Right. That’s the process almost universally.

At the beginning, when you started working for him in 1957, 1958, I assume he did not have a cartoon editor.

No.

And that he edited the cartoons personally.

Yes. See, he *wanted* to be a cartoonist. He worked very hard at it, but it just didn’t work. So he compensated by becoming Hugh M. Hefner. Poor devil. You don’t feel very sorry for him.

Yeah, if you can't be a cartoonist, you might as well be Hugh M. Hefner.

Might as well be Hugh M. Hefner. Right. But he still is—he's it, as far as cartoons are concerned.

How did it come about that you did what I would call the "thematic galleries," where you would do three, four, five pages at a time on subjects like Sherlock Holmes, or Edgar Allan Poe, or so forth?

They call them "spreads" in the business, and I would just take a theme.

Would you propose that, or would they propose that?

I'd do it. And some of them were based on a European thing. One of the first I did, I think, was Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum. So I just went around, sketched stuff, and made cartoons out of it.

How would you describe your relationship with Hefner evolving over the years? How well did you get to know him, and how close did you become?

Oh, I love the guy! He's just very open and a very sweet guy. When he was in Chicago, I stayed at the Mansion, which was a whole different thing from the Mansion West. It was a great big robber baron thing, god knows who it was that built it, it was like a fort. He's very accessible, and he's swell. He's a very perceptive, bright and extremely sharp.

What would you guys talk about?

Oh, god knows what. Just practically anything. He's a remarkable guy. Historically, I think, he has yet to be appreciated, although I'm beginning to run into various intellectuals who are planning essays and studies and so-on on him, because he essentially—and it was on purpose—changed the country. He changed the attitude.

And you were sympathetic to those changes?

Totally! We had this kind of puritan thing, which is very understandable—you can see why we did. It's in our history. But he changed the idea of sexual stuff from dirty, smutty, yucky, cruddy, to very nice, very fresh air, very sunny, very bright, very healthy. And I think someday he's gonna be recognized. He's like—well, I mentioned P.T. Barnum—I think he's as influential as P.T., as a transformer of society. And he did it very cleverly, on purpose. He schemed things out, like with the frontal nudity, which was a no-no. What he did is extremely clever; he did a spread of greatest, most famous artists in the period—I guess it was somewhere in the 1960s, or late 1950s—he got all these guys who were legendary famous artists, and the assignment was, "Do me a Playmate, as you visualize her." And, of course, in every one of them, automatically, there's frontal nudity. They didn't think about it. So there you

were. And it was art, so the censors couldn't do a damn thing about it. So he got that in; it was the first general publication that—there it was, on the newsstand, frontal nudity, and because of that dodge, there was that precedent. He followed that with a very artsy photo spread of a black female athlete—I can't think of her name—done by some legendary photographer, whose name I also cannot think of. This too had, automatically, some frontal nudity, so he'd moved it into photographs. Again, they couldn't do anything about it, so he'd established the second precedent. And there the horses were off. Everything he does, he plans very carefully. He's a great gentleman, incredible. God help you if he started a war.

[Laughs] *You were a Midwestern kid, and your dad was a Republican. Where did your openness to Playboy and your generally progressive nature come from?*

For one thing, I was knockin' around with bohemians.

But you must've had a propensity to do that.

Yeah, sure, I was a bohemian myself.

So were you reacting against—?

No, it just was more fun that way. And made more sense. And I got left very early on—when Henry Wallace was running for president, I went around on the Near North Side, passing out pamphlets, and was going through that sort of thing. I liked the attitude. But I had a very disillusioning thing because the Communists would have parties, and they'd be very nice parties. They'd have free food and drinks. But I noticed that they'd have these very artificial little discussions which would “just naturally happen,” and some wise Communist would sit there, and everybody would cluster, and this wise Communist would come out with this bullshit, and everybody would nod. And I thought, “Well, this is horrible. I do not like these people.” And there was this friend of mine who had been in Todd School, which would occasionally take in somebody to help. And this guy was Jose Rodriguez—he was from Guayaquil, Ecuador, and I don't know how it all came together, but they took him in in grade school and brought him all the way through high school. They used him, the Communists. So I became quite anti-communist, in that sense. But I'm definitely on the left side.

It's interesting, this nexus, where all these cultural leanings converge. Because you wouldn't think of—well, would you think of Playboy and bohemianism?

No, not really. [pause] Well, it's a pleasure thing.

Which can somehow encompass bohemianism.



Yeah. It's a very pro-life kind of thing.

Tolcrant. A good home for you.

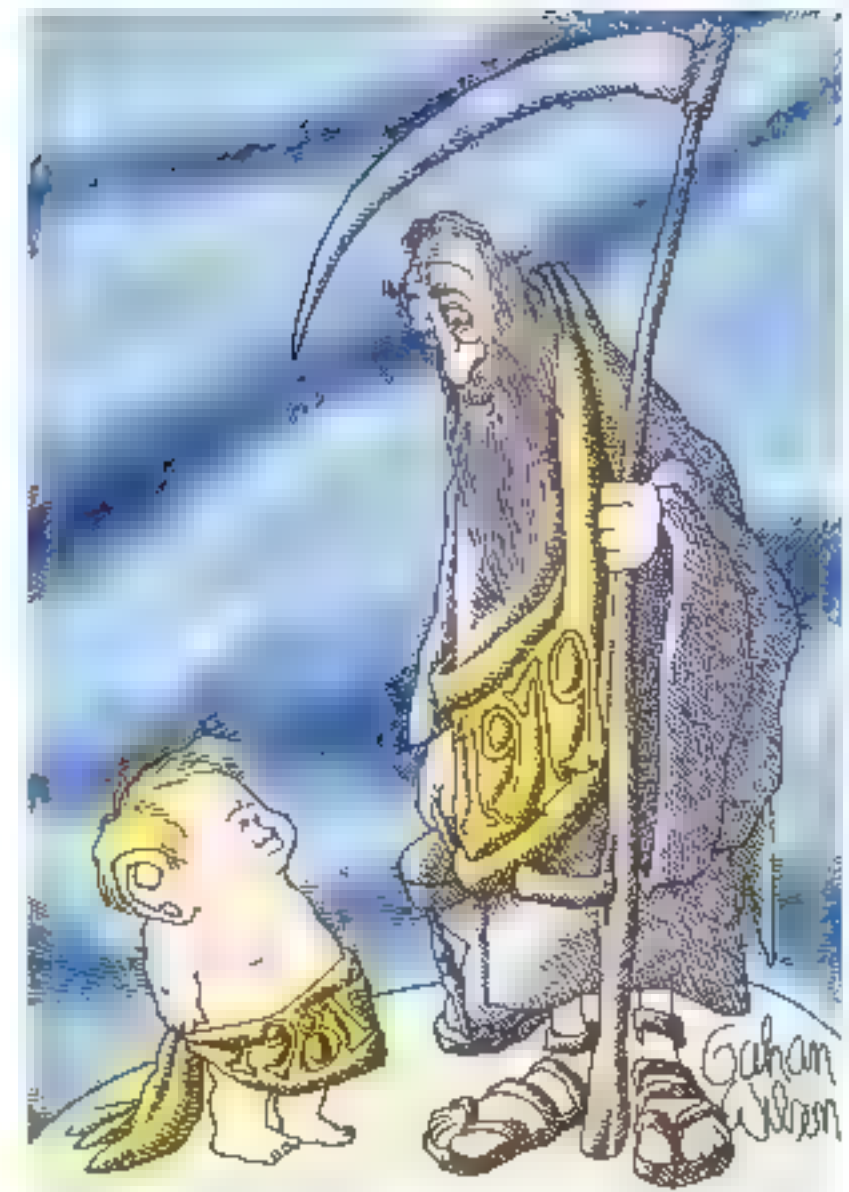
Yeah, it's open to discussion. You can talk about this, you can talk about that.

It must be very different from The New Yorker.

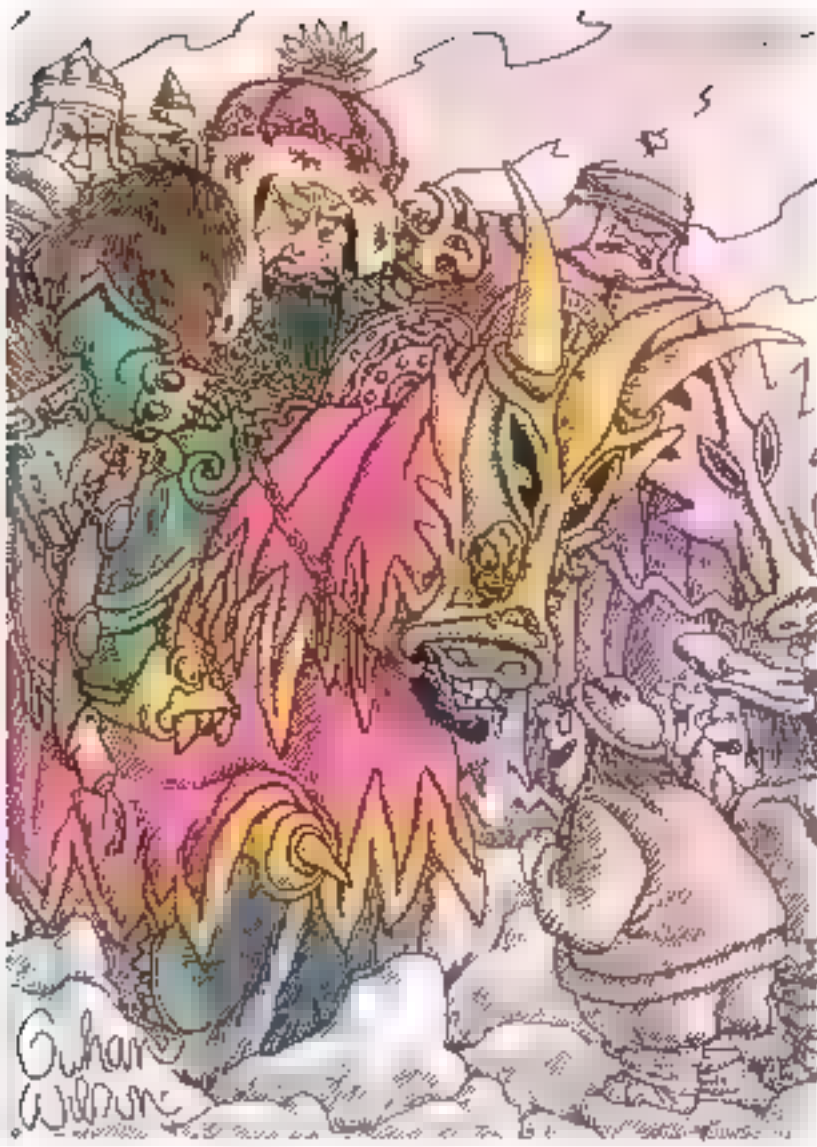
Yeah, it's a whole other—oh, yeah. Completely. And also, it's a one-man operation. It's very much Hefner.

Over the years, my impression was that Hefner gave up some editorial control of the magazine to other editors, or to people he's hired, or whomever.

Through the years, every so often, there's been some people who have moved in and tried to change it. And usually it ends with him just firing the lot of 'em. [Groth laughs.] Several different times, this has happened. So he's not to be crossed.



Hef suggests deleting the melting Dalí-esque clock in the background. "I think he was right in that what I had done was, you're in this Dalí-esque, surreal thing, and the two figures are part of this Dalí-esque surreal scene, so you have the potential of distraction. Some of the less observant readers would be getting confused and puzzled because they're trying to work it all out. It gets you bouncing around, saying, 'Well, what's that got to do with this funny big watch back there?' whereas if you just have the two figures on a blank page, it's kinda cute because in a way it's more relaxed and there they are, and they both came to the same conclusion. It makes these gigantic apocalyptic figures funnier, that they're in this ordinary Joe situation." (p. 429)



Hef suggests adding characters to flesh out the composition. "It could've worked, I suppose, just having Genghis Khan, or whoever he was, on his elaborately costumed horse towering over this peasant, but it is much better to have him backed up by this appalling army. So that was a good suggestion. If nobody'd said anything, I might've just had this towering figure and this little tiny guy and they're on a plain. But it's better—he's absolutely right to put in the army." (p. 450)

But he's maintained his interest in cartooning throughout the years.

Oh, yeah. He's a frustrated cartoonist, which he admits. He says that it just dawned on him—he just didn't have it. But he was a good editor, he realized that. The guy's very intelligent, and he's a realist, too.

One of the facets of your work is that each cartoon is based upon an idea, but it's the drawing and the idea combined that make it work, and the drawing has to be funny. In other words, the same idea with a different drawing would not necessarily be as effective. Could you talk a little about how you developed your particular approach to drawing so that it's intrinsically funny?

It's like, in reference to the movie director business, you have a script, and what you do is you cast carefully so that the actor is appropriate for the character that's written, and the theme, you wanna have it look authentic. You have to take into account the atmosphere of it, and the lighting. And then you go into costumes and the whole business. You have to go through *all* that stuff. And the director has the luxury of costumers and so on and so on, but you're really doing all the separate duties, but you eye it the same exact way as a director would.

One of your stylistic quirks is that you draw these everymen (and everywomen) with these rubbery, scrunchy, fleshy faces. I can't imagine your work without that particular quality. You once mentioned how you were impressed by the looks on people's faces when you were a kid during the Depression. And I wonder if it all comes from that.

I think certainly I must've been aware, or I wouldn't have had that flashback.

The expressions on the people's faces are expressions of panic or fear or horror, or even resignation or bewilderment—

Yeah, that's well-observed. And again, as in a film, if you've got an eerie, fantastic event, it's strengthened if the people, flesh-and-blood people, react to it appropriately, and look very flesh and bloody in the presence of this astounding whatever it is. It fills it.

Politics doesn't rear its head in your cartoons often. But when it does, it's incredibly potent. You seem especially interested in conservationism—or what used to be called conservationism.

Very much so. I was into the destruction of the planet Earth quite a while back, way before it caught on as a *cause célèbre*. One part of it I think was the Acme Steel Mill with its death-making machinery, situated in the little towns around these places that were poisoned, very obviously. And you could see the acid's effect on the walls, the boards of the houses, and on the rooftops, and on the vegetation and so on. And



Graham Wilson



"The World is a Stage" /
PR - 1



The composition shifts from the horizontal in the rough to the diagonal in the finish, a practical move based on the requirements of *Playboy* and the luxury of getting a full page rather than a two columns wide spot. "In this one, the rough is a horizontal. That would be appropriate for, say, *The New Yorker*. But for a full page *Playboy*, you could do it, but you'd have to work at having interesting things going on in the space above and the space below. If you put things at a diagonal, that fills up the whole thing. That's why you do it. You have a reasonably logical situation until you get down to the bottom of the diagonal and it starts getting weird. I have to introduce the story and the introduction of characters in a certain order, you bring them in that certain order of purpose. So in this one, the speaker is on the top of the diagonal. So you start with him, and then you move down that diagonal. And then you notice, up again, a guy's head. I don't think you see the lead first. The other thing is you've got more activity going with the guy with the empty plaster cast, and you evolve into that." (p. 357)



"...RELY, NICE (GRACE), YOU'VE MADE SOME
SPECIAL MR. APPLETON'S LITTLE LIKE."

I think that alerted me to the casualness with the fragility of the thing, and the callousness. And also, really, it's a terrific joke that we have this one really teeny fragile place and we seem to be intent on destroying it, and I suspect, irredeemably started a process of doing it. But yeah, I became aware of that quite early on.

One of the earliest cartoons on that subject was published in 1970, where you have two people in a Washington D.C. Senatorial office—the Washington monument is in the background—and they both have these enormous gas masks on, and the one guy is walking and saying "I'm sorry, Senator, it's some more of those crackpot conservationists." And it occurred to me that a lot of your cartoons—

Yeah. Oh, I'm absolutely furious at it, and I had this fantasy that it might alert some senator, you know.

And then, I don't know if you heard this story or not, but I did a cartoon once which had this living room—some suburban place—and the couple that own it cowering behind chairs, and outside you see all

kinds of animals prowling around, and there's a bear trying to get in the kitchen window. And the guy says, "I knew this would happen if those crackpot conservationists had their way." And this incredibly odd thing happened where my father wrote me a letter—he almost never wrote me a letter—that he was so touched that I had finally come to see the truth. He completely misinterpreted the cartoon and thought I was *against* the crackpot conservationists. And at that point I realized that this is not working. [Laughs]

He was firmly anti planet Earth, although it would never have occurred to him, and he would've been shocked and saddened had he thought that I thought that. And he loved nature! He loved to be out on his boat in the water and so on. But they just—I don't know...I just don't get it.

Well, it may be generational. There was such a lack of awareness, I think, at that time.

And the present crew...now it's been turned into a kind of a fad, and I suspect a lot of the stuff that they're doing is about as useful as those little green mouth patches they're wearing in Mexico.

Some of these cartoons, not only the ecological-oriented cartoons, but you also have cartoons that refer to nuclear armageddon and "The End of Civilization" and so forth—

The Eskimo's probably the best one in that category.

Where the Eskimos are looking up at the missiles?

That's probably the basic statement.

Now, was Hefner as welcoming to those kinds of cartoons—?

Actually, he said he liked that one the best of them all.

I ask because in a way I thought they were a little...not anti-Playboyish, but Playboy stood for hedonism, for consumerism, and...

Well, Playboy, you get right down to it and...it's intriguing, the difference between Hefner's approach to sex and pretty girls and so on...nobody's given him credit for this. All the magazines before, and there were lots and lots of them which had naked or half-naked ladies, were all smutty. The ladies were assumed to be whores. It was disgusting and shameful, but "isn't it fun." It was not a pretty display. It was nasty. Sex had the implication—it was an affirmation that the righteous minister is correct about the body and its evils and so on. But Hefner, the pretty girls he has are carefully chosen—the sort of girls that you really could take home to mama.

The girl next door, right.

Yeah. And they're proud. They're not sluts. They're healthy. You wouldn't get VD from them. It's a very positive approach to sex, to life, basically. So he's pro-life. He's one of the good guys, I definitely think.

Let me ask you this about that. Playboy presents this prettified view of the world. Pretty girls, pretty cars, and...

Yeah, it's a have-a-nice-time sort of thing.

But your work clashes with that, in the sense that it's deeply—I don't know if you'd call it misanthropic, but it can be pretty harsh in its point of view. And yet Hefner's tastes are broad enough to encompass both of those.

Well, as I say, he continually ran short stories and interviewed authors who were exploring that kind of stuff too.

True. But did you ever get any sense that what you were drawing was somewhat, or occasionally, antithetical to the Playboy point of view?

Not really, no.

You published several short stories in the magazine, which we are publishing here. When did you start writing prose?

Oh, geez, that's quite early on. I really don't know when I did.

Your first story in Playboy appeared early, in 1962.

Is that when, huh?

"Horror Trio." What prompted you to write prose stories?

Oh, I love that genre, of course.

Were you a big reader?

Oh, yeah. And so I just eventually got into writing it, too.

So you basically wrote a story and submitted it to Hefner?

Yeah.

And it was as easy as that?

It turned out to be, yeah.

You obviously like writers like Poe and Lovecraft.

Oh, certainly, yes, of course

"Horror Trio" is a traditional horror story; "The Manuscript of Dr. Arness" is about the pitfalls of immortality or, more generally, of the dangers of getting what you want. Your next story, though, was "The Sea Was as Wet



as Wet Could Be,” and I thought that story was quite a bit different from the previous two, because it was almost reminiscent of F. Scott Fitzgerald.

You’re right, I hadn’t thought about that before you asked me, but right, it’s very F. Scott Fitzgeraldy. It really reads like one of his pieces.

Yes, in its observations of the adult couples in the first half of the story. The tone is really masterful in a way that I thought the previous two weren’t, quite.

Yeah, he’s got all these—he wrote god only knows how many things—about just walking through a room and getting exhausted. Yeah, F. Scott Fitzgerald for sure. And a great gentleness about it, and my character in the story loves that girl. And even there’s a sadness about the monsters. You and I have talked about James Whale. He got that all the time, the monster says, “Why?” And it’s very important that the monsters are treated affectionately, really.

Do you believe there’s a gentle dimension to your work?

Absolutely. Every so often I get mad as hell, but yeah, basically, you feel great pity and sorrow.



The composition is reversed between rough and finish; the two (living) characters have been moved to the left—the skeleton on the pot is the last figure the reader sees rather than the first, reading left to right. “It’s like bizarro, bounce o, you go down to this very unusual thing of this guy talking to a workman who’s working on a thing with his workbox and then all of a sudden—bop. You pop up to this illuminated open toilet with a dead body in it. You wanna have ‘em start out with, if somebody’s talking, with the somebody talking.” (p. 344.)



Hef suggests adding “trees and bushes of park in background.” “Very likely I would have [added the background without Hef’s suggestion] because I’ve already done the foreground, but I probably would not have done as much of it as I did, but because he brought it to my attention, I put in another thing in the foreground. And it does a nice job of putting a realistic background to this incredibly bizarre, surreal guy. The surrealists would do that all the time. They make a coherent landscape. Dali’s early stuff was particularly brilliant—and then incredible elements are tossed into it, which makes it all the more startling. If you hadn’t done it that realistically, it wouldn’t have had that much impact. And when that was understood, the other more abstract artists could move in. But as the kickoff, Dali was perfect.” (p. 316)



Or empathy, I think. You know the most clichéd question in the world is where your ideas come from—

Oh, all over the joint.

But I was wondering if you could tell me a little about the creative process. A lot of your panels are purely visual, and I think of them as quintessential cartooning: Cartooning that is expressing something that couldn’t be expressed in any other form. For example, the very second cartoon you did for Playboy has the woman sweeping, and she’s actually sweeping her shadow away. Could you walk me through and tell me how you come up with ideas? Do you just sit and stare at a blank sheet of paper until something pops up into your head? Do you take notes as you’re wandering through the day—

The core technique is, yes, you do have a blank sheet of paper and a pencil, and generally speaking, unless you’ve got some specific scene that you’re pursuing, you just latch onto something. Anything whatsoever, so...cleaning; that would evolve from that. When I taught car-

tooning, I told my students the important thing is to stay with whatever you're wrestling with, and you eventually come up with something.

Do these ideas come to you in a flash?

Some come quickly, some sort of float up. My basic image is that your consciousness is like a fisherman in a boat on this vast sea, and what you do is you're expert with this rod and reel and bait and hook technique stuff. And you toss your line over the water, and the thing sinks down, and you are sensitive to the tug of this little touch, and you pull it up and hook it, and then you reel it in. And it takes a lot of trouble to do that, and then you flip it into the boat, which is the final piece of skill, and you got it. But it's all mysterious. The profundity of what we got inside there is staggering.

Once you nail the idea, does the drawing come easily?

Again, it's just like building a set and lighting it and so on. It has to be appropriate to whatever the joke is, and you make it so that it's focused on that. You see the same thing in El Greco, how he sets the whole thing up and lights it, and you see the eyes and the hands and the whole posture doing whatever this saint is up to, and even the furniture helps out and has to be right. It's a whole gestalt.

When you have the gag fully conceptualized, do you usually do only one drawing or do you sketch variations?

No, it varies. Sometimes it's just—*zip zip zip zip*—comes right out, easy as pie. Other times you really have to wrastle with it. I mean, sometimes you got a thing where you just gotta get the posture right on this fellow, and you have to erase and redraw, and erase and redraw forever, and you *finally* get it. And you see it when you get it. And then other times, it just flows right out of the pencil.

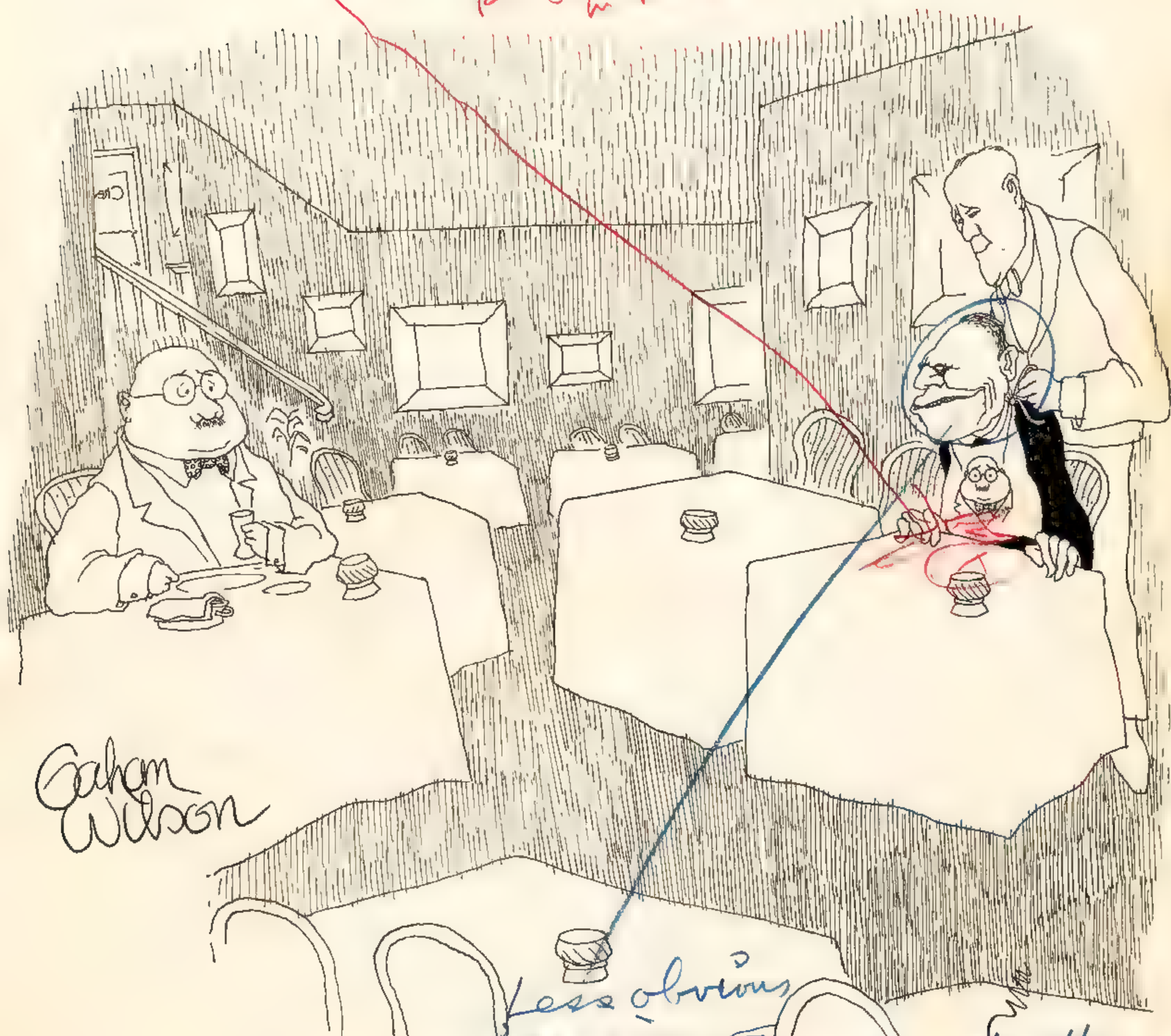
Speaking of ideas, I was astonished: Going through the book, I realized that you created a New Year's joke virtually every year. I don't even know how you could do that. [Laughs.] Do you put yourself in the New Year's mode?

You just have to do it. And then there's Thanksgiving, and I found this time, initially, I had a terrible time coming up with Thanksgiving ones, 'cause it's not as rich as the other stuff, so I had to *really* stretch out and dream up stuff that I hadn't dreamed up before. I essentially have succeeded in doing it, I hope to everybody's satisfaction, and so there's about three of them there.

When you're called upon to come up with a cartoon about a specific subject, like Christmas or New Year's, have you ever panicked because you just couldn't come up with anything?

Put table
in front
of him +
knife + fork
in hands

OK color
- built



Graham
Wilson

less obvious
expression
perhaps by not
having man look directly at
man. (Have him looking at man out of
corner of his eyes.

No. When I teach cartooning, part of the thing I give 'em is how you go about making up ideas. One of the things I stress is that what you do—sometimes a cartoonist will be called upon to raise money for starving orphans or whatnot, and a little group of us will be on the stage with easels, and the audience will start calling out a place, a name, a character, a situation, and so on, and then you make a cartoon using these items right in front of the people. It's quite something to see. But the thing is, what you do, if you're gonna make up an idea, you're sitting there and you say [*makes thinking noises*] "Chair, somebody on a chair." And then you start fooling around with something on a chair. And eventually you'll struggle through it and you think about something on a chair.

But if you're in this situation, where people will start throwing out suggestions to the cartoonist—what they don't do, and what the cartoonist does, is float around. There'll be one thing, and then they'll drop that entirely, and then they'll start thinking about puppy dogs, and then drop that and do something about going to a delicatessen. But the only way you're going to crank out a bunch of cartoon ideas is to give yourself a specific challenge. You start out with a specific topic, quite narrow, and then you just stay with it, like Thanksgiving. So that's why I'm saying that Thanksgiving's not unusual, it's what you do all the time. Take one topic and wrestle with it until you come up with something that is funny about this. Otherwise you just spend a whole day dreamily going from Thanksgiving to Christmas to Hannukah to God only knows what. You'd be doing the Druid holidays and so on. And you wouldn't get anywhere at all. You'd just sort of waft off to something else again, which is really pleasant if you want to relax sometime.

That sounds like it could be pretty easy to fall into.

That's the core thing you have to get through their heads, or they'll never be able to make cartoons.

One of my pet theories is that there's an organic wholeness in the work of the best cartoonists, where everything comes together, from the line itself to the sensibility to the subject matter, and I'd extend that, in your case, to even the names you give your characters, which are both quintessentially ordinary and weirdly Wilsonian at the same time.

Well, it's like if you're writing a story, a very important part of writing a story is the characters' names, both first name and last name, and the combination of first name and last name—they have to be appropriate not to just the guy's or the woman's personality, but to the whole thing: the whole gestalt. And then depending on the sort of story it is, there'll be some kind of uniformity in the names. If it takes place in a London club, they're all going to have London clubby names. If it takes place on



Hef suggested putting a less obviously predatory expression on the waiter's face, "It's cute, and it's right. It makes it so it's not heavy handed." As to Hef's suggestion that he not look directly at his victim, but more toward the reader, which offers a fuller shot of his face: "You can imagine a scenario where he's ordered this bib so the waiter comes up to you with a selection of bibs and he's made his selection. And at that point he might've been looking at the guy. You could do a whole other joke if you had that—the waiter with the little rolling cart of bibs—and then you would have to have the guy looking at the fellow, pointing at him, and maybe pointing at the other thing too. So it may be that Hefner was just playing with it and he went through that little fantasy that I just went through, so by the time where he gets to the point where he's having a bib, you don't look at the lobster as you get your lobster b.b.t.ed on." (p. 299)

the sidewalks of New York, who knows: all over the place. You'd select names on purpose to establish this rich hodge podge of all different kinds of people.

What medium do you use for color?

I do a pencil drawing on a piece of tracing paper, usually, and I work all the lines out. Then I tape that on the back of the piece of paper I'm gonna do it on, put that all on a lightboard. The reason I do that is because I used to do the drawing on the paper itself, but if it gets complicated, like with doing a hand right, or something like that, you can mess up the surface of the paper—even if you erase carefully. Also, if you do the drawing and you get halfway through and you screw up, all you have to do is just detach the pencil drawing from the back and put it on another piece of paper. So that reduces the tension. You don't ruin everything if you screw it up, and have to redraw the whole thing. And then having done the inking of the line drawing, I take watercolors—good watercolors—and just fill it in appropriately. And when that's all done I spray it with a fixative, so that holds it all down and I can keep doing layers, depending on what's on it and what sort of atmosphere I want. I can do layer after layer of crisscross, or with pen, or rubbing with pencil, or add additional overpainting of colors, or even rubbing pastel, or all sorts of things like that. I can take as many as six different kinds of media.

What does the use of watercolor give you that other color media don't?

I don't want an opaque thing, because that would block out the lines. So watercolor's the best. I usually find myself using the British ones; they seem to be best.

Much of your humor derives from creating a perspective so lopsided that it achieves a level of absurdity. For example, you did a fantastic cartoon of Hitler in 1970, where Hitler is fuming over some inconsequentiality.

Oh yeah, in the South American hideout.

Right, and some guy is saying, basically, "Get over it." I think that's the kind of thing that makes people stroke their chin and wonder, "How in the hell did he come up with something like that?"

Well, thank you. It's like the fisherman. Often, it's just totally mysterious. You'll start trying to think, and *pop!* This thing will just be there. And I don't have the vaguest idea of where it comes from, but it's really a staggering demonstration of how much of your mental operations are unconscious.

It seems like such a cartoon must come from a different place than the cartoon, for example, where one hunter tells another hunter, "Congratulations,



Hether's suggestion that sweater and knickers be added to the remains of the child "puts another little hook in the image" (p. 382)

Baer, I think you've wiped out the species." So, there are different parts of your creative intelligence at work in these cartoons. Would a cartoon like that come from outrage?

Yeah, that's one of my ecological things. I must confess that I—well, I have total sympathy with people hunting, if they have to eat, or something—but I don't get the idea of going out and killing some poor little squirt on a branch.

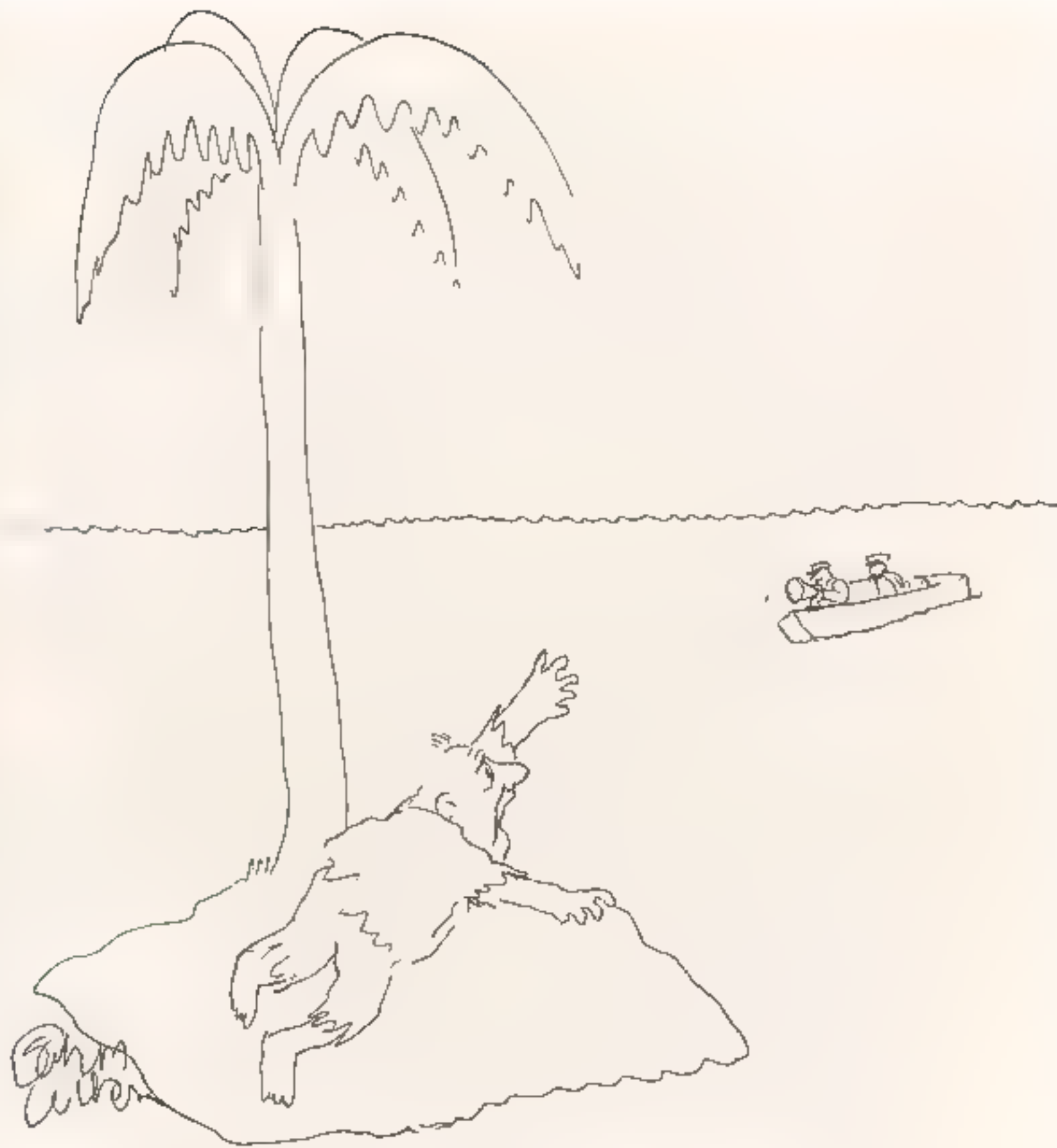
With an automatic rifle, probably.

Yeah, yeah. And then pretending you've had some sort of equal contest with a critter. It's pathetic. And mean. The most romantic and glamorous and fantastic relative I had—a real tough bastard—was Uncle Mac, Mac McGavern. And he was by the Wilsons, who were an extraordinarily religious outfit. And I am related to William Jennings Bryan, which I'm very proud of, ha ha.

He's a great-uncle, right?



Wilson changed the rowboat to a yacht in order to clarify the cartoon, which could've been read as the people in the rowboat ridiculing him. "I think it's better because it explains the joke. They're definitely employees of Mr. Sims. This guy on the island is obviously a very eccentric wealthy person, and has arranged this diet thing, so he probably would have a more impressive boat coming to check on him. I think that probably was why I extended it into a more comfortable boat. If Mr. Sims decided, 'Screw this, I wanna go back to the mansion and have something nice to eat,' he could." (p. 527)



Yeah, he's a great-uncle, and the other great-uncle that I *really* am proud of is P.T. Barnum. God bless him. But Bryan would come by and he'd have one of these huge breakfasts, and give a little speech as he ate it. And my grandmother and grandfather Wilson had a lot of kids, but they also adopted kids. In two cases, the kids ended up marrying one of the kids that they grew up with: sort of brother-sister, in a funny way.

Uncle Mac married Aunt Marnie (she was the Wilson). Mac was tough as nails. He had been a Marine in World War I, and then he came out of that and he joined up with the Pinkerton Detective Agency, and did detective agency stuff, and also beat up on unions that were getting too uppity—and so on. [*Speaks gruffly*] And he talked like this, Gahan. Tough, tough, tough. And he married Marnie and they went and established a successful saloon and restaurant in Bridgman, Michigan. He would take these outings, and he would go to the Southwest and hunt mountain lions—not to kill them, but to capture them. He would sell these mountain lions to lion tamers, so he got to know the best lion

tamers in the business, and they taught him the basics of lion training. By this time he had established some motel cabins along with the restaurant and the saloon, and he set up a cage where he kept a couple of lions, and he would do a mountain lion taming thing which you could come see. And he expanded this thing into a zoo, which became a huge draw. It was quite a successful operation.

He was a very sweet man, for all of his toughness, and it was fascinating to see him with these creatures. I just loved him. I had this great picture—I don't know where it's gone to—there I am, this little thing about six or seven, if that, and I'm surrounded by baby lion cubs. Not the safest thing in the world. But I'm happy as a clam! Couldn't be happier. So that may have something to do with the ecology thing. That was very extraordinary.

Let me get back to your drawing. When you know you're doing a drawing in black and white, rather than color, do you ink it differently, knowing it's going to be black and white?

Yeah. It won't necessarily be a different line, but it'll affect the whole thing, because you're aiming at this color finish. So everything has to be consistent. Most of the colored stuff would actually be cluttered if it wasn't in color.

So, in effect, when you're doing a black-and-white illustration, do you use the pen and the ink as surrogate color?

It's like shooting a black-and-white movie. You can get effects that way that you can get with color, if they will let you do bizarre effects. But the old sensational black-and-white crime movies were marvelous in black and white, because they were in black and white. And you could get away with all kinds of really neat, dark, startling stuff. An alley—you can't do an alley better. It's much better in black and white than it is in color. And also the open doorway—how many times do they have the door open, spreading this diagonal beam of light? How much better that looks in black and white.

You must be a fan of film noir.

Love it. Yeah, it's great stuff. And it's of its era, its time—and the black and white. There were some successful extensions of it into color, but *really* it worked better in black and white. There's a nice tackiness you could get about it too, which you can't do with color. Also with color you have tonal stuff, including lots of flesh tones, whereas the black and white can be a lot more brutal and a lot more shocking.

I think I'm a purist. I don't think you can have film noir in color.

It's appropriately named, yeah. And then you get into horror movies.



GOSSIP COLUMN

Gahan — This could make a nice finish with different art. This perspective doesn't help the gag. And the patient should look more like a character from "The Sopranos" & less like a fat Peter Lorre. He looks like a large baby here — with oversized feet & hands. Let's see the analyst's office.



"SO DO YOU THINK THIS SOPRANO GUY WILL END UP WHACKING HIS SHRINK OR WHAT?"

Probably the best is James Whale. But the only people who took on color and then had fun with it in a horror movie were the Hammer people, and what they did was to go way back to penny dreadfuls and use that period—so the color was very stage-set-y on purpose—and had this delightful Victorian, or a little before Victorian, mood about it. That was jim dandy. They just made the whole thing fantastic.

Did you like Val Lewton?

Lewton was brilliant. His understatement was just staggering. The black and white was perfect. He could have this very subtle image stuff going on, which would be too realistic in color.

I don't know you that well, but having read the entire book and all the cartoons, I have to ask you this: You seem like a very generous-spirited and sweet guy in a way. But do you think you have a misanthropic or cynical streak?

I must say that I have been profoundly shocked with the goings on of the last couple of months, where I thought I was an extreme cynic, and it turns out that I'm like Alan Greenspan: a naïf, a total and absolute naïf. [Groth laughs.] Remember the sad confession he made?

Yes, where Greenspan admitted that his whole worldview, the consequences of which he's saddled us with, was essentially wrongheaded.

Yeah, he said he really did *believe* these business people—the bottom line that was important was to satisfy the customer, and it never occurred to him they were just making money, period.

Isn't that utterly pathetic?

Yeah, it was touching. I was very touched by it [Laughter]. But I had no idea these guys were as bad as they are, and I think that's the thing that's really very discouraging. It's the same thing as with the Nazis. It's astonishing how terrible people can be.

A combination of self-interest and cluelessness.

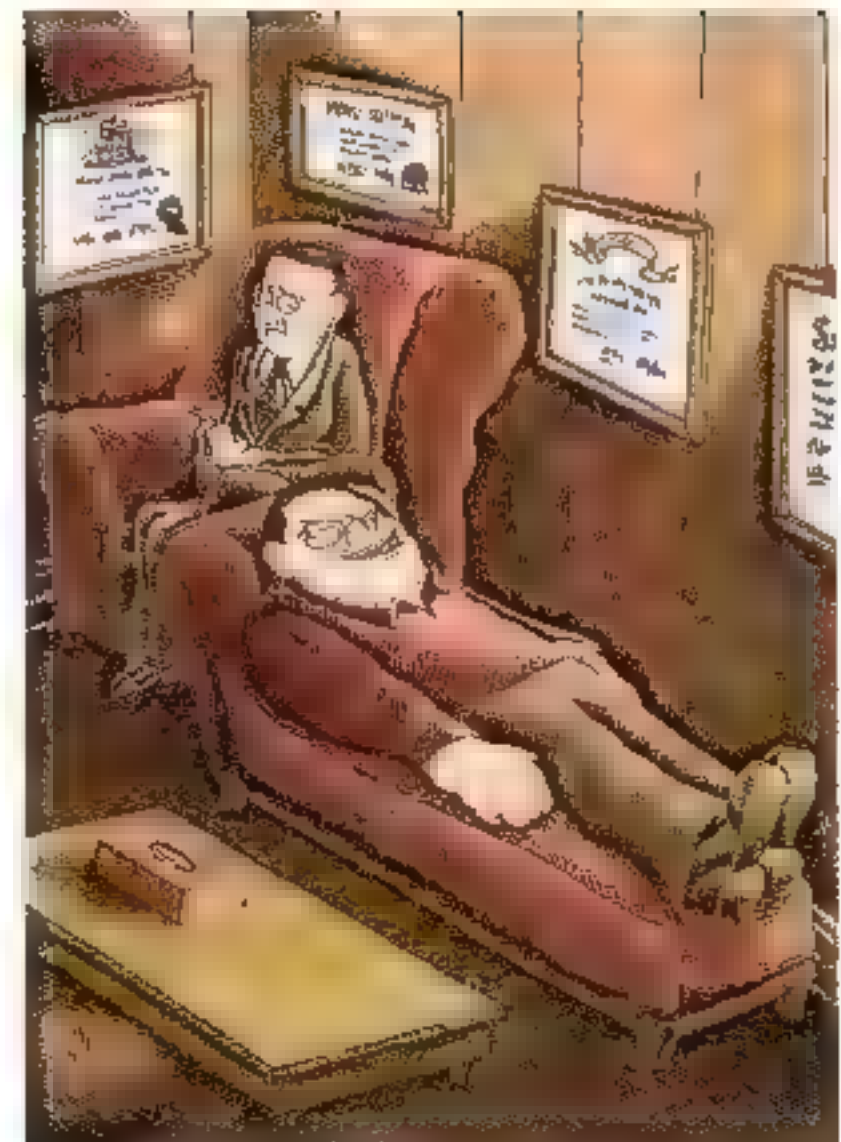
Yeah, and boogishness and a kind of cruelty that is staggering. And I had no idea, though I was going around being very suspicious of business people, because I've had some experience with them, with my father working with them, and having met a number of them—I knew that essentially they were in it for the money [laughs], and not to serve the public, as Greenspan seemed to think. “Satisfy the clan,” I think was his phrase. But I had no idea they are as horrendously crappy as they are, and that they would use such cruel and *egregious*, really just miserable, rotten, flat-out illegal con-game maneuvers to victimize the people they culled out as victims. The mercilessness of them: no sense at all of hurting people. They seem to be completely impervious to other people's pain. I'm just flabbergasted. I didn't know they were anything like this bad.

Well, you've been quite consistent in your criticism of corporate culture throughout your cartooning career.

With good reason. [Laughs.]

But you think perhaps not to a sufficient—

As I say, it turns out I've been a kind of Greenspan. I had no idea they were this bad. All my fantasizing was *so* short of the mark that I'm positively embarrassed. The thing I don't understand, although you do a little bit if you mingle with some of these people, is that it's such evil that they're doing, you wonder, “How can they do it?” It's very mysterious to me. And then they go home and be reasonably kind to their wives and children.



This is one of the few examples of a suggestion by Hef that Wilson didn't agree with. “This is an interesting one because Michelle Urry thought that I was right to make Tony Soprano this huge thing, where as Hefner wanted him reduced. So I created, I made his feet big, I made his hands big, and the body is totally out of proportion to his hands, head and feet.” He denies basing the character on Peter Lorre, fat or otherwise. “I was doing a sort of Tony Soprano kind of character.” (p. 748)

Maybe it's naïveté that compels you to be so appalled by it. Otherwise you would just accept it as status quo.

Yeah. I dislike people mistreating people, and the casualness with which they do it. One of the cutest cons ever played was: "You can't cheat an honest man," which of course is total bullshit, and was invented as an excuse. "It's their fault that they were cheated." Most cons are based on carefully selecting people you *can* screw. And that's even worse. It's one thing to outwit and brutally con somebody that's an equal of yours, but to do it to somebody who's not — that's playground bully stuff.

Well, what's the old saying, "A sucker's born every minute"? That's their credo.

Why that would make them feel any better about it, I can't imagine. They'll call up enough old people and they'll find one who hasn't a clue, and that's the one they'll zero in on. It's just egregious cruelty.

On the flip side, based on the number of cartoons you've done lampooning our courts, you don't have much confidence in the meting-out of justice in our judicial system, either. [Laughs.]

Well, I think it beats a lot of 'em, but it's painfully obvious that the game is rigged. And as I say, I thought I was cynical, but I had no idea that it was *this* rigged. I didn't know that it had been this badly skewed. Track the thing down, and it keeps going higher and higher, to points where you would've thought that our system took care of that. It doesn't.

You usually portray the courts as being farcical.

I think there's a lot of very sincere people doing their damndest to make the thing work, but, yeah, if you're rich and you're well connected and so on, there's a lot of advantage you can take. It's perfectly legal, and it shouldn't be. As I say, I thought the whole thing was more honestly run. I didn't know it was this gaffed.

The cartoon that may be the most brutal and cynical in the book, and that ought to be given some sort of award, is the one where aliens are looking at a couple of simple Neanderthal saps and saying "What possible harm can come to this planet from teaching these miserable creatures how to use fire and simple tools?"

As I say, that's been the great shock to me in the last few months. It's been very traumatic.

I thought I knew a lot more than I know. I suddenly realized that naïveté is bottomless. I just didn't have a clue, and I had no idea that the gaffing was that thorough. I don't know why *not*, because if you go into backward areas, where prejudice is so prevalent, it's improved in some ways. I remember talking to one lawyer, who was saying, "Innocent



Hef suggests adding "laboratory background à la Frankenstein."

"I probably wouldn't have added quite as much, I just tossed in more and kept piling it on. I think it could work either way, really. I probably would have automatically, in doing the full page color finish, put in the background of the lab so it wouldn't just be this isolated stuff in the foreground." As to the genesis of the cartoon, "I probably had been pursued by some n.n.ay that I remember I got this one call that turned out to be some confidence game, and their recorded message was, 'Your vehicle, something something something, da da da da da da.' And I have no vehicle. So this annoyed the hell out of me. It's just unsufferable. The vehicle thing was fascinating because apparently if you were foolish enough to respond to it, they really were working a total and utter illegal con, and they got a lot of people." (p. 651)



... THIS
... OPPORTUNITY BECAUSE IT GIVES ME
A CHANCE ... TRY NEW ...

I'm pointing this way indignantly and lifting my torch. Not that it does a hell of a lot. That's the other thing, is you get to rant and rave and do all these things and notice other people in the same boat, and you realize you haven't accomplished too much here.

[Laughs.] Well, one does what one can. Did you ever think of becoming a political cartoonist? Was that ever on your radar?

I enjoyed very much the experience of working during the summers on the *Chicago Tribune*, because the guy who was the editor was a neighbor of ours, and I'd made friends with him. It was quite a story. We lived in this nice apartment building and he was directly above us. He would have these parties in this large apartment, very big sprawling apartment, and they were amazing affairs because all of these *hugely* important politicians and business people and so on would show up. He'd invite them and get them drunk, and have them make fools of themselves. I was involved in radio as a young kid, and I eventually drifted away

from it because I wanted to be a cartoonist, so my drive didn't take me there.

However, my best chum, who unfortunately has now passed on, was deeply into it, and he kept that up. He eventually ended up being Oprah Winfrey's first large producer. The two of us worked together doing things for a stretch. I was conversant with some of these machines, which were not common at that point. One of them was a wire recorder, before the tape thing, so we recorded on a wire instead, which was impossible to edit, unless you were expert and could clip it. I had shown this thing to Maxwell, the editor, and he was just thrilled at this machine. These parties would take place on the weekend, and the people would come in and I would be there with my little recording machine. We had a first run, and it worked beautifully. He would get these *toweringly* important people that you saw all the time in the newspapers and heard over the radio, and he's just get 'em sauced. Then he would bring them over to the machine and have them record some horrible drivel they were coming up with. And then, that done, he started the next party with a playing of that recording to the next bunch of big wheels, while they were just starting their first drinks. And they would laugh and chuckle, and in no time at all, of course they were bombed and doing the same exact thing. He could feed one party into the other party that way, and then he also had the pleasure of having all these things on record.

So we had a very close relationship.

I wonder where those tapes are now.

I wonder where they are, too. He was a terrific ally, and he did all kinds of nice things for me. But that's why I say I was appalled, because I spent quite a bit of time on the inside track. And that still left me innocent. The thing that really has me wondering is what if we ever really find out how awful it *really* is? I don't even want to think about it.

Our heads would explode. Do you think those parties and that technique he used enhanced your social conscience or your understanding of the world?

Definitely. It was a scary and extraordinary peek at the way it really was. These people were huge. As big as you can get. And he liked pushing them around and making them hop through hoops. And he was subtle about it. They didn't know he was doing it. For all their cleverness, they're not really very smart. I suppose that's one reason why they can endure mistreating so many people.

I wonder if there is a correlation between intelligence and compassion.

I think there definitely is. I don't think it's reliable.

Well, that wouldn't explain William F. Buckley.



Gahm

Let's make him
a little odder looking.
Attractive, but strange.

— the color
of
H

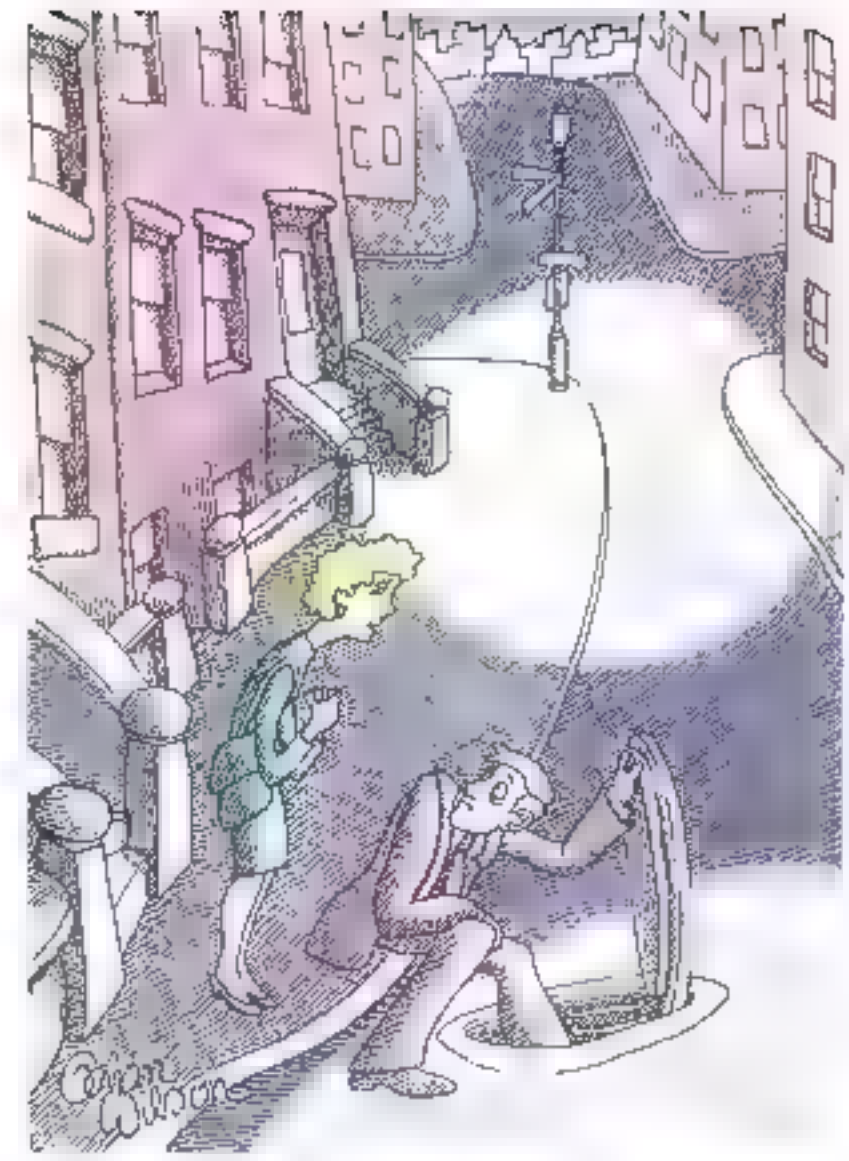
"MAYBE WE SHOULD GO TO MY PLACE, A' BEK ALL!"

No, it doesn't. But I think it does relate. You can put two and two together and say, "You've destroyed this family and everybody in it." They can make good excuses for themselves. They don't perceive, in a funny way. But I think intelligence is certainly a way—well, it's what Obama's doing now. He's applying simple intelligence to a lot of stuff that's going on, and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. But that's a big part of what separates politicians who are doing something that's decent from those that aren't. But then intelligence can be used by Adolf Hirlers and people like that.

Misapplied.

It's a very depressing topic. [Laughter.]

Yes, the misuse of intelligence. That is a depressing topic. We should probably end it there. †



Hef suggested that Wilson make the man stepping into the manhole "a little odder looking, attractive, but strange." "What I did was to emphasize his innocence and surprise that she would be in any way discomfited, so that was how I read 'strange'. And the thing that's bizarre about him is, you see the occasional crime shot and this guy's just done something awful, and he looks like he's thinking, 'Well, what's the fuss about?' " (p. 6)2,





INDEX OF ABHORATIONS

Copyright © 1994 by William S. Burroughs
New York, New York, 10001

- 3-D Glasses: 154
Abduction: 573, 713
Abnormal lifestyles: 577, 620, 643,
645, 646, 651, 649, 665
ACME: 71
Adam & Eve: 106
Advertisement: 12, 43, 9, 27, 303,
23, 544
Affair: 68
Africa: 59
Airplanes: 593, 793
Airport: 13
Alice in Wonderland: 670
Alien: 62, 72, 453, 345, 463, 371, 422,
473, 487, 490, 514, 544, 553, 557, 575,
600, 603, 605, 649, 663, 671, 673,
684, 695, 733, 740, 762, 796, 797,
824, 840
Alleyway: 105
Ambulance: 339, 266
Anchorman: 543
Angel: 90, 40, 67, 340, 443, 446
Angry Kid: 798
Animal Takeover: 296, 30
Anthromorph: 277, 29:
Antique: 587
Anti: 71, 773
Ape: 56
April Fool's Day: 624
Archaeologist: 25, 358, 363
Argument: 763
Artist: 44, 666
Arrest: 73, 743
Art: 645
Artist: 76
Art: 804
Assault: 665
Assassination: 715
Astronaut: 92, 46, 270, 371, 463, 584,
604, 624, 625
Athe: 139
Attorneys: 804, 808
Axe: 63, 40, 174
Baby: 128, 200, 361, 415, 425, 679, 725
Backpack: 32
Bar: 109, 439, 444, 454, 670, 708,
749, 775
Barbecue: 29, 360
Barber: 247
Bartender: 149
Baseball: 202, 315
Basement: 614, 70, 71
Bat: 47, 730
Bathroom: 91, 121, 412
Bathub: 94, 121
Beach: 30, 44, 45, 46, 348, 618, 803, 819
Bear: 781
Bedroom: 60, 43, 55, 157
Bedtime story: 604, 645, 673, 694, 778
Bertie: 732
Beware of dog: 579
Bewilderment: 71
Bicycle: 460
Big Bad Wolf: 50, 54, 778
Bigfoot: 832
Bird: 133, 46, 149, 150, 215, 251, 385,
406, 392
Bird man: 754
Blackboard: 29
Blood: 516, 809
Blow up Doll: 374
Blowing raspberry: 36, 115, 83
Boat construction: 731
Boat: 97, 109, 448, 406-407
Body suit: 744
Bones: 54, 57, 105, 14, 110, 134, 227,
251, 298, 303, 341, 444, 710
Bottlecap: 4
Boulevard of Broken Dreams: 800
Bowling: 3, 27, 223, 266, 458, 519
Brick: 136, 715
Brendan: 33
Brew: 406
Broom: 15
Buddhism: 186
Bulb's Eye: 211
Buried: 734, 736
Bursting door: 33
Business as usual: 576, 648, 726
Businessman: 12, 72, 77, 168, 383,
430, 438, 455, 403, 71, 34
Butcher: 63, 244
Butler: 5, 11, 173, 666
Butterfly: 51, 514, 646
Butter: 784
C. A.: 30, 777
Cactus: 779
Cactus County General Store: 810
Cake: 434
California: 58, 668
Cameo: 774
Cannibal: 76:
Cannibalism: 694
Campaign: 18, 77:
Camping: 452, 832
Candle: 165, 522
Candlelight: 117, 129, 244, 299, 362,
724
Canyons: 818
Captain Atom: 48
Car: 3, 63, 154, 92, 294, 314, 381
Carnivorous plant: 70, 307, 60, 805
Carrot: 1115
Cassino: 652, 767
Castle: 96, 578
Cat: 14, 196, 233, 307, 432
Cauldron: 696
Cavemen: 2, 520, 740, 783
Cement boots: 88
Cemetery: 35, 281
Cereal: 43, 544, 414
Ceremony: 767
Champagne: 747
Chamber of Horrors: 80-87
Champagne: 624
Changing times: 572, 576, 581, 582,
614, 616, 644, 660
Chaos and destruction: 62, 60, 79, 94,
95, 16, 126, 250, 57, 262, 105, 296,
385, 414, 539, 559
Chat room: 723
Cherry: 61
Chief: 28, 69, 19, 149, 434
Chest: 60
Chicken: 511
Chieftain: 767
Children: 44, 45, 47, 82-83, 89, 23,
120, 32, 55, 204, 262, 312, 321, 449,

INDEX of ABHORATIONS

- 533, 543, 547, 571, 573, 612, 649, 672,
 694, 698, 709, 768, 784, 787, 821
 Children, demented: 571, 679, 729
 Children in peril: 573, 575, 649, 661,
 667, 679, 694, 698, 612
 Chimney: 134, 729
 Chinese food: 583
 Christmas: 89, 134, 171, 189, 265, 382,
 401, 428, 440, 472, 550, 593, 609,
 661, 675, 729
 Christmas carollers: 661
 Christmas party: 797
 Christmas tree: 743, 824
 Church: 115, 300, 826, 829, 834
 City life: 576, 606, 660, 692, 707
 Cityscape: 576, 804
 Classroom: 781
 Claus, Santa: 89, 134, 171, 382, 396,
 401, 440, 454, 472, 505, 518, 560,
 571, 573, 581, 582, 649, 650, 675,
 677, 685, 698, 715, 729, 730, 773,
 784, 797, 798, 811, 823, 834
 Cleaning Windows: 182
 Clock: 69, 236, 269, 699
 Clone: 721
 Clown: 279
 Cocoon: 51
 Code red: 791
 Coffee: 517, 718
 Coffin: 96, 734, 799, 809, 826, 829, 834
 Coliseum: 788
 Comedian: 448
 Comics: 354, 455
 Companion: 786
 Computer: 16, 653
 Conductor: 65, 255
 Confusion: 24, 30, 31, 39, 64, 65, 73,
 108, 132, 263, 337
 Construction worker: 19, 461
 Consultation: 815
 Coover, Robert: 744
 Corporate life: 592, 608, 612, 648, 656
 Corpse: 134, 138, 162, 166, 282, 353, 377,
 500, 706, 710, 719, 726, 734, 760
 Costume: 32, 36, 54, 133, 150, 157, 744,
 755, 782, 821
 Courtroom: 165, 309, 370, 388, 408,
 457, 497, 554, 623, 751, 756, 814
 Cowboy(s): 90, 292, 470, 779
 Crime: 494, 574
 Crossword puzzle: 591
 Crowbar: 49
 Crustacean: 214, 28
 Crying: 744
 Crystal Ball: 568
 Curse: 742, 794
 Curtains: 772
 Cytoplasm sex: 100
 Da Vinci, Leonardo: 95
 Dagger: 35, 81
 Date: 599, 606, 611, 692, 706, 757, 809,
 822, 827
 Death: 27, 219, 231, 281, 305, 353, 379,
 445, 516, 558, 585, 667, 668, 697,
 714, 753, 834
 Death ray: 27, 179, 267, 651
 Demented plants: 691
 Demented Santa: 573, 649, 650, 675,
 698
 Demon: 47, 341, 350, 645, 815
 Dentist: 683
 Department store: 664, 675, 678, 685
 Depression: 583
 Desert: 145, 205, 589, 774, 779
 Desk: 804
 Detective: 574
 Devils: 717
 Diaper: 128, 200
 Dickens, Charles: 624
 Digging: 831
 Diner: 402, 437, 718
 Dining room: 70, 264, 299, 377, 558
 Dinner: 552, 822
 Dinosaur: 114, 118, 358, 362, 566, 621,
 783, 803
 Disco: 431
 Distressed damsel: 108, 153, 793
 Diver: 122, 123, 338
 Doctor: 23, 58, 200, 219, 231, 233, 238-
 242, 272, 276, 305, 341, 357, 364,
 372, 459, 591, 647, 674, 702, 720,
 727, 731, 787, 795, 805, 817, 417
 Doctor's office: 23, 58, 136, 231, 341,
 417, 540, 657, 787
 Dog(s): 34, 66, 71, 110, 135, 261, 281,
 286, 364, 376, 423, 469, 579, 801,
 831
 Dog door: 738
 Doomsday disease: 689
 Door-to-door salesman: 714
 Doorman: 802
 Dracula: 96, 153, 161, 411, 730, 809
 Dragon: 168, 360, 567, 816
 Drawing straws: 785
 Drinks: 797
 Drug(s): 26, 33, 690
 Dumpty, Humpty: 19
 Dunce's cap: 29
 Dungeon: 15, 52, 55, 88, 99, 416, 475
 Dustbin: 138
 Dynamite: 69, 152, 286
 Effective sales technique: 589, 622,
 714
 Egyptian: 25, 45, 259, 263, 358, 742
 Elderly: 247, 256, 297, 474, 545, 547,
 548, 561, 562, 727, 818
 Elderly Women with Cats: 196, 235,
 532
 Elephant: 93, 216
 Elevator: 156, 159, 367
 Elf: 171, 382, 396, 798, 811
 Empire State Building: 793
 End of the world: 615, 719, 792
 Escalator: 217
 Escher, M.C.: 337
 Eskimo: 17
 Estate Agent: 53
 Evil Heritage: 587
 Evil twin: 730
 Execution: 82, 140, 175, 211, 254, 290,
 369
 Explorers: 742
 Exterminator: 711
 F.B.I.: 677
 Faceless: 103, 378, 418
 Factory: 127, 482
 Fairground: 125
 Fake teeth: 744

INDEX of ABHORATIONS

- Falling sky: 780
 Family: 575, 609, 615, 644, 645, 658, 659, 669, 671, 679, 709, 755
 Famous last words: 740
 Famous person: 659, 668
 Farmer: 541, 655, 780
 Father: 810
 Father and Son: 277, 280, 361, 601, 604, 819
 Feeder: 754
 Fire: 379, 740
 Fireplace: 433
 Fishing: 406, 547, 601, 616, 750
 Fishing line: 17, 30, 109, 148, 481, 724
 Flashlight: 25, 34, 110
 Floating heads: 721
 Flood: 783
 Flower: 295, 317, 347
 Fly: 568
 Flying: 580
 Flying fish: 164
 Flyswat: 22
 Football: 380, 388, 426, 697
 Footprints: 37, 786
 Fortunato: 54
 Fortune cookie: 583
 Fortune teller: 568, 612, 700
 Frankenstein's Monster: 108, 186, 396, 402, 444, 532, 569, 682, 701, 715, 727, 756, 759, 768, 813
 Freezer: 784
 Frog: 794
 Front porch: 782, 792, 818
 Frost, Jack: 38
 Fruits and vegetables: 765
 Full moon: 98, 112, 153, 335, 440, 477, 787
 Funeral: 295, 353, 486, 495, 826, 829, 834
 Gangster: 68, 104, 117, 206
 Garage: 154
 Garbage: 644, 693
 Garden: 655, 831
 Garden of Eden: 106
 Gargoyle(s): 115, 610, 640
 Ghost: 131, 230, 501, 624, 660
 Ghost town: 766
 Giant baby: 758
 Gift: 715
 Gigantic: 24, 25, 31, 37, 40, 56, 93-94, 98, 120, 128, 147, 151, 185, 198, 289, 476, 498, 525, 528, 539, 565, 601, 607, 697, 722, 765, 776, 819
 Gladiator: 61
 Glasses: 523, 776
 Global Warming: 582, 600, 615, 621
 God: 106, 570
 Gold bug: 57
 Gold Coin: 259
 Golfer: 124, 607, 617
 Gorey, Edward: 667
 Gossip: 754, 759
 Government: 791
 Grandfather clock: 745
 Grave: 736
 Grave robbers: 799
 Graveyard: 710, 799
 Graveyard shift: 718
 Gray, Dorian: 107, 746
 Greenhouse effect: 600, 621
 Greeting Cards: 474
 Grim Reaper: 558, 668, 686, 695
 Grimoire: 41
 Grocery store: 43, 574
 Guillotine: 82
 Guitar: 569
 Gun(s): 34, 37, 90, 104, 177, 206, 216, 221, 224, 226, 250, 257, 268, 369, 405, 458, 483, 516
 Gym: 525
 Haircut: 747
 Hallowe'en: 32, 741, 768, 782, 794, 821
 Hallucination: 459, 506, 598, 786
 Hallway: 48
 Hand: 412, 765
 Hanging: 50, 120, 173, 537, 808
 Hawaiian shirt: 30
 Heads: 538, 743, 795, 817, 827
 Hearse: 133
 Heartbeat: 58
 Hearts: 800, 813
 Heaven: 585, 764, 812
 Heavenly glow: 767
 Henny Penny: 780
 History: 578
 HMO: 682
 Holmes, Sherlock: 34, 37, 197, 401, 550
 Homeless: 105, 195, 437
 Homes: 692, 777
 Honey: 31
 Hood: 140, 165, 301, 390
 Hopscotch: 47, 401
 Horner, Jack: 150
 Horse: 44, 45, 359, 773, 779
 Horse ass: 779
 Hospital: 727, 731, 795, 805, 817
 Hostage: 571
 Hotel: 54, 60
 House creaking: 671
 House Made of Bricks: 152
 Housewife: 13, 714, 760
 Hughes, Howard: 659
 Hunter(s): 124, 268, 405
 Husband: 517, 555, 654, 693, 760, 763
 Ice Cream: 424, 553
 Ice Skating: 190
 Idol: 712, 737
 Igor: 716, 813
 Infectious disease: 591, 689
 Infinity: 63
 Inflatable: 44, 123, 271
 Inhabited: 825
 Ink: 319
 Insect: 71, 147, 558, 559
 Intergalactic Federation: 762
 Intergalactic Santa Convention: 797
 Interview: 581, 820
 Invisible: 26, 127, 167, 744
 Invisible Man, The: 744
 It's A Wonderful Life: 572
 Jack in the Box: 233
 Jack-Be-Nimble: 151
 Jack O' Lanterns: 782
 Jigsaw: 39
 Jogging: 585
 Judge: 165, 388, 570, 613, 701, 808, 814
 Jury: 623, 756
 Kangaroo: 302

INDEX of ABHORATIONS

- Key: 198
 Khan, Genghis: 450, 556
 Killer Turkey: 264
 Kilt: 101
 King: 149, 306, 556
 King Kong: 793
 Kinky sex: 387, 548, 759
 Kiss: 125, 313, 660
 Kitchen: 28, 298, 414
 Kite: 669
 Knife: 729, 750
 Knight: 45, 168, 180, 509, 556, 567
 Knitting: 196, 256, 565, 741
 Laboratory: 26, 29, 33, 74, 100, 140, 170, 651
 Lake monster: 724
 Lantern: 789
 Late to work: 735
 Lawyer: 645, 751, 756
 Leaf blowers: 800
 Leash: 132, 135
 Legal trouble: 647, 804
 Leprechaun: 508
 Levitation: 828
 Life after death: 585
 Lifeguard: 618
 Lincoln, Abraham: 81, 130, 536, 721
 Line-up: 117
 Lions: 788
 Little black dress: 827
 Little Nipper: 622
 Living room: 39, 58, 71, 709, 723, 754, 759, 760, 806, 830
 Lizard: 23, 96, 728, 818
 Loch Ness Monster: 101
 Locked up in a basement: 680
 Lost City of Atlantis: 522
 Love: 68, 125, 201, 206, 334
 Lumberjack: 63
 Lying under oath: 570
 Mad scientist: 651
 Maelstrom: 56
 Mafia: 400, 447, 535, 665
 Malpractice: 647
 Mammoths: 783
 Man-eating Armchair: 184
 Manhole: 692
 Maniacal grin: 716, 720
 Mariachi band: 599
 Marionette: 826
 Mariticide: 85, 189, 266, 687, 693
 Mars: 684, 824
 Masks: 186, 246, 291, 378, 523, 755, 757
 Meat: 574, 586
 Men and women: 580, 650, 680, 687, 693, 708, 710
 Menacing grin: 27, 36, 38, 41, 43, 56, 61, 67, 89, 139, 153, 299, 368, 712, 750
 Meteors: 766, 790
 Microscope: 100
 Middle Ages: 578
 Military: 42, 59, 116, 201, 221-224, 226
 Millennium: 715, 716
 Mindless employee: 718
 Missing Persons Bureau: 73
 Moby Dick: 148
 Modern art: 645
 Monks: 188, 491, 564, 789
 Monster(s): 23, 145, 155, 156, 174, 194, 234, 257, 283, 287, 298, 311, 314, 316, 321, 334, 339, 343, 355, 361, 364, 370, 404, 418, 436, 462, 475, 479, 493, 528, 539, 559, 598, 604, 608, 611, 614, 620, 671, 679, 700, 701, 707, 709, 713, 723, 741, 752, 755, 756, 789, 806, 814
 Monster under the bed: 575, 672
 Montresor: 54
 Moon: 20, 92, 98, 110, 112, 158, 174, 270, 334, 335, 345, 810, 825
 Mother: 688, 729, 831
 Mother Goose: 149-152
 Mountain: 18, 22, 816
 Mountain climbers: 18, 22
 Mourners: 826, 834
 Movie: 451, 521, 572, 620
 Movie props: 20
 Moving company: 229, 667
 Mr. Harper: 802
 Mrs. Claus: 784, 811
 Mummy: 716, 735
 Murder: 221, 224, 227, 252, 259, 366, 369, 379, 386, 537, 574, 656, 665, 687
 Museum: 118, 234, 283, 645, 735
 Mushroom cloud: 95, 126, 222, 435, 690
 Music: 56, 65, 66, 352
 Napoleon: 511
 Narcissism: 384
 National Enquirer: 603
 Native Americans: 796
 Natural disaster: 790
 Nature vs. humans: 600, 616, 621, 655, 691
 Naughty list: 730
 Nazi: 258, 363, 449
 Necessary adjustment: 720
 Necktie: 189, 664
 New Year: 429, 441, 489, 519, 535, 551, 594, 610, 676, 686, 699, 745, 758, 785, 812
 New year's resolution: 594
 New York City Dept. of Sanitation: 707
 Newspaper: 390, 801
 Newsstand: 790
 Night Court: 701
 Noah's Ark: 176, 496, 783
 Nothing: 304
 Nuclear weapons: 17, 201, 222, 235, 294, 435, 507, 513, 761, 792
 Nudity: 190, 259
 Nurse: 731, 795, 805
 Obesity: 303, 522, 527
 Octopus: 601, 789, 819
 Office Meeting: 235, 368, 379, 383, 422, 425, 656
 Ol' Dixie Bucket O' Chicken: 303
 Old couple: 384, 580, 659, 693, 766
 Operation: 233, 238-242, 276, 443, 456, 538, 817
 Opium den: 166, 237
 Organ: 728, 757
 Organ bank: 775
 Organ Donation: 238-240
 Organ grinder: 56
 Ornaments: 743, 824

INDEX of ABHORATIONS

- Owl: 98
 Ozone layer: 582
 Painting: 41, 78, 107, 111, 163, 194, 306, 466, 471, 601
 Parents: 768, 798, 830
 Park bench: 392, 660, 726
 Park rangers: 773
 Particularly Dangerous Antiques: 587
 Passed out: 775
 Patchwork quilt: 778
 Patient: 805
 Pearly Gates: 764
 Pedestrian: 807
 Pentagon: 301
 People Xing: 722
 Perfectly legal parody of Disney characters: 92, 670
 Pet(s): 385, 520, 547, 622, 664, 768, 806
 Peter Pumpkin Eater: 151
 Phantom of the Opera: 728
 Photography: 305
 Pilgrims: 796
 Pilot: 733
 Pirate: 46, 407, 613
 Pizza: 69
 Poe, Edgar Allan: 52-58
 Poison: 204, 718, 822
 Poisonous Products: 204, 213, 260
 Polar bears: 833
 Police: 54, 131, 193, 206, 245, 302, 307, 365, 386, 590, 713, 823
 Politeness: 579
 Politician: 246, 297, 549, 662, 695, 721
 Pool: 668, 681, 820
 Porter: 54, 131
 Porter, Cole: 728
 Portrait: 601, 746
 Post mortem doll, cute little: 609
 Potato chips: 737
 Potted plants: 760
 Prescription: 702
 President: 588, 605, 662, 695
 Priests: 737
 Prisoner: 15, 81, 84, 88, 111, 114, 154, 199, 215, 416
 Professor Moriarty: 36, 401
 Profit graph: 49, 172
 Prophecy: 546-549, 780
 Prosecution: 814
 Protest: 50
 Psychiatrist: 14, 67, 313, 349, 598, 619, 717, 748, 828
 Pterodactyls: 803
 Pumpkin: 151, 782
 Punk teen: 658, 733
 Puppet: 116, 139, 230, 826
 Pyramid: 25, 45
 Rain: 122, 284
 Rat: 52, 96, 728, 799
 Ready-to-eat: 752
 Recycling: 644
 Red Death: 54
 Red Riding Hood: 150
 Reflection: 97, 161
 Reindeer: 593, 773, 784, 823
 Repairman: 614, 641
 Reporter: 820
 Restaurant: 69, 174, 488, 494, 558, 599, 606, 663, 669, 706
 Retirement plans: 792
 Ride: 725
 Robot: 40, 74, 158, 180, 191, 265, 288, 430, 546, 762
 Rock 'n' Roll: 569
 Rocket: 17, 20, 42, 59, 146, 158, 171
 Rocking Horse: 139
 Rome: 788
 Rowing: 97
 Rue Morgue: 56
 Running away: 758
 Sack: 802
 Sacrificial offering: 21, 283, 678, 712
 Safe: 49
 Salt: 153
 Sandcastle: 45
 Sarcophagus: 25, 99
 Satan: 592, 645, 804
 Satellite: 12
 Scientist: 16, 26, 29, 40, 42, 70, 74, 170, 249, 267
 Scotland: 101
 SCUD missiles: 774
 Sea Monster: 109, 194, 291, 424
 Secret Service: 588
 Secretary: 172, 334
 Security guard: 80, 84, 86, 102
 Sedan chair: 144
 Selection: 795
 Severed head: 83, 169, 426, 456, 502
 Sewage plant: 24
 Shack: 766
 Shadow: 13, 15, 48
 Shakespeare: 57, 279
 Shark: 121-126, 346, 681
 Shop: 119, 137, 161, 162, 186, 197, 210, 284, 384, 410, 563
 Shopping cart: 384, 410, 765
 Shovel: 736
 Show and Tell: 781
 Shrunk Head: 232
 Shuffleboard: 424
 Sitcoms: 762
 Skeleton: 467, 566
 Skeleton in the closet: 763
 Skull: 791
 Skyscraper: 772
 Slaves: 788
 Snake: 181, 278, 452
 Sneeze: 83
 Snow: 382, 773, 786, 801
 Sobriety test: 823
 Soldier: 690, 761
 Sopranos, The: 748
 Space: 20, 79, 92, 146, 158, 170, 345, 563
 Spider: 543, 791
 Spooky trees: 31, 57, 153, 160
 St. Peter: 585, 764
 Stake: 799, 829
 Stalking: 85
 Stand-up comedian: 719
 Steel girders: 19
 Stethoscope: 787
 Street cleaners: 800
 Street sign: 56, 72, 122, 193, 807
 Street Vendor: 540
 Stripy socks: 23

INDEX of ABHORATIONS

- Students: 732, 781
 Study: 35, 51
 Suicide: 69, 178, 213, 243, 248, 666, 699, 702
 Summonation: 47
 Sunblock: 618
 Sunlight: 749
 Superman: 157, 545
 Supermarket: 43, 574
 Surgery: 727, 795, 817
 Surveillance: 777, 791
 Survey: 383, 490
 Survivors: 752
 Suspenders: 778
 Swamp monster: 820
 T-shirt: 586
 Talent agency: 64
 Talisman: 509
 Tall man and short accomplice: 725
 Taxes: 578
 Taxi Cab: 442, 453
 Taxidermy: 93, 103, 168-169, 654
 Teddy bear: 89, 139, 484
 Telemarketer: 651
 Telephone: 23, 51, 53, 60, 64, 172, 177, 187, 235, 236, 334, 359, 365, 577, 651
 Television: 21, 27, 135, 219, 225, 380, 404, 480, 522, 539, 542, 641, 777, 830
 Temple: 737
 Tent: 832
 Tentacles: 355, 402, 424, 453
 Test tubes: 26, 35,
 Thanksgiving: 427
 The Substitutes: 546-549
 Therapy: 717, 748, 828
 Thespian: 279
 Thieves: 49
 Three Little Pigs: 152, 778
 Three Wise Men: 774
 Throw away: 739
 Tie: 808
 Tiny: 533, 534, 538, 772, 776
 Toilet: 210, 344
 Tomb: 742
 Tools: 740
 Toothpaste: 213
 Torture: 15, 52, 86, 88, 99, 137, 350, 515, 642
 Tourist attraction: 578, 603
 Toys: 503, 533, 609, 643
 Tracks: 801
 Tracy, Dick: 104, 590
 Traffic: 576, 606
 Trap: 729
 Trick or treat: 741, 794
 Trophies: 665, 827
 "Tunnel of Doom": 725
 "Tunnel of Love": 125
 Turnover rate: 739
 TV antenna: 135
 UFO: 62, 192, 524, 557, 733, 740, 796
 Underage: 670
 Unusual Hats: 185, 218, 292, 670
 Upside-down: 97, 159
 Urine: 546
 Usher, Roderick: 53
 Vacation: 793
 Vacuum cleaner: 714
 Valentine's Day: 799, 813, 825
 Vampire: 402, 411, 428, 478, 499, 521, 577, 650, 683, 701, 749, 799, 809, 829
 Van Helsing: 521, 713
 Ventriloquism: 554
 Video Games: 460, 468, 643, 830
 Vintage wine: 789
 Violence on TV: 641
 Vitamins: 585
 Voodoo: 731
 Vote: 605
 Waiter: 669, 706
 Walking stick: 36, 101
 War on drugs: 690
 Washington, George: 721
 Water for sale: 589
 Watson, Dr. John: 35, 36, 37
 Wealth: 666, 668
 Weaponry: 34, 37, 90, 104, 171, 177, 206, 216, 221-224, 226, 235
 Weapons of Mass Destruction: 810
 Wedding: 375, 434
 Werewolf: 14, 112, 132, 245, 293, 351, 402, 439, 440, 477, 504, 512, 601, 701, 787
 Wet paint: 163
 What's the matter with kids these days?: 571, 643, 658
 Whatever: 409, 807
 Wilde, Oscar: 107
 Will: 706
 Wine: 564, 669, 746
 Wiretapping: 320
 Wish: 798
 Witch: 32, 41, 578, 696, 794
 Witness: 814
 Wives: 754, 763, 806
 Wizard: 794
 Women!: 580
 Wrath of God: 570, 572
 Wreath: 87
 Wrecked house: 776
 X marks the spot: 46
 X-ray: 341, 492, 720, 817
 Y2K: 686, 716
 Yeti: 18, 373, 485
 Zoo: 181, 212, 220

